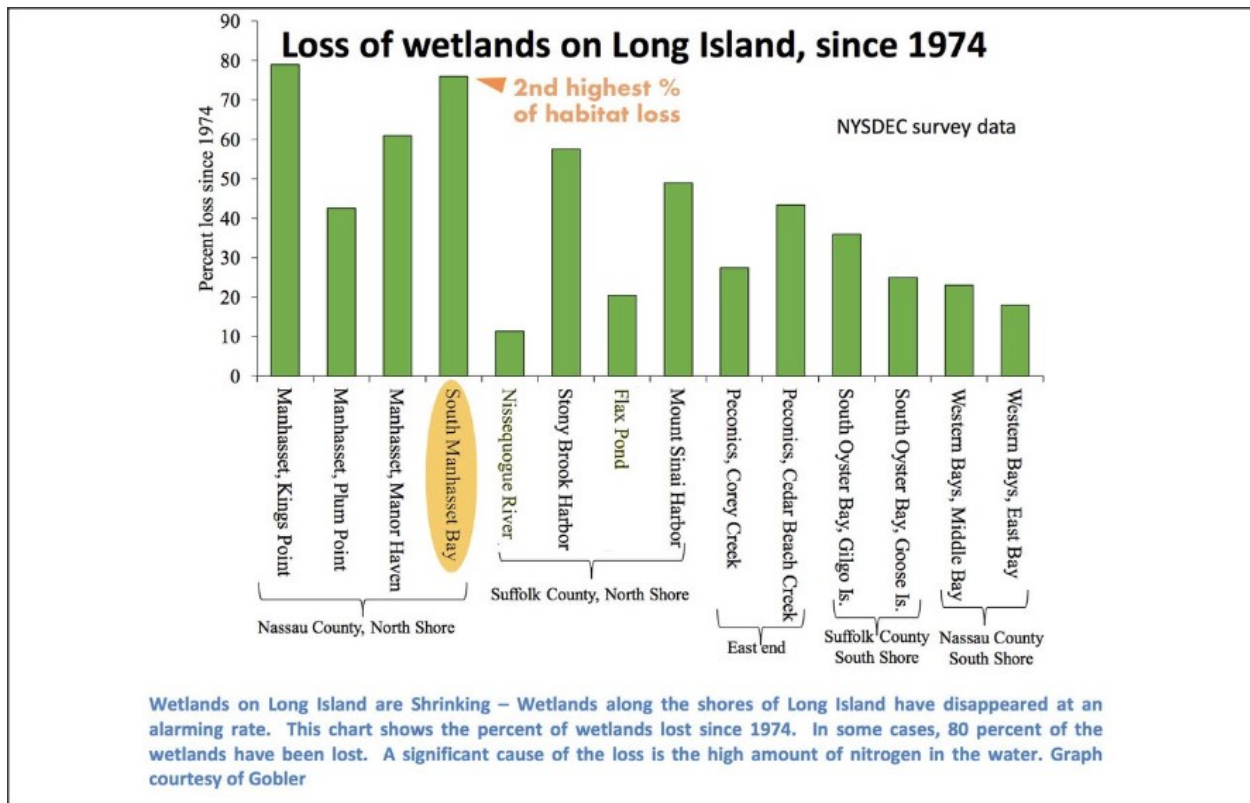


As Science Advisor to the Science Museum of Long Island and board member of the Port Washington Estates Assoc. I'd like to praise the Village of Plandome Manor's foresight in establishing Village Code §115-3(C)(3) in requiring a permit in order to exceed the maximum allowable amount of 50 cubic yards of fill that when placed, will not exceed contour changes, as previously cited. This is particularly important when it concerns the land surrounding Leeds Pond, the largest and most ecologically important freshwater body located on the Port Washington Peninsula and the largest sub-watershed draining into Manhasset Bay.

The chart below, taken from "Coastal Resiliency and Water Quality in Nassau and Suffolk Counties", a NY Governor's commissioned report by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), shows how much habitat loss has been sustained in our area on the north shore of Nassau County, particularly on south Manhasset Bay.



At the recent BZA meeting, Board of Zoning and Appeals members responded to representatives of the local community, along with several ecological experts who explained the negative effects of adding 300-500 cu yds of soil to the banks of Leeds Pond, especially while simultaneously removing mature trees. The board members stated, "We're not Environmentalists" and to paraphrase, "If DEC has given approval, why is it our job to save the health of the pond?" Our response is that village ordinances are the last line of defense.

If the developer had planned landscaping that observed the village code and hired qualified environmental consultants, 500 cu yds of soil would not have been delivered, some portion of which will now be removed. There'd be no need for the new organization Save Leeds Pond to start a petition that now has over 300 signatures, the Mayor of VPM would not have written at least 2 explanatory letters to her constituents, 2 law teams would not have been engaged, the already over-burdened NYSDEC would not have to review 3 or more proposals, 3 environmental experts would not have testified, civil engineers need not have developed 3+ schemes, several environmental organizations wouldn't have to weigh in, and a contentious zoning board meeting wouldn't have gone to 11:30 pm, trying everyone's patience.

No one benefits from developers asking permission after taking egregious actions: not the future homeowners or their children, not the immediate neighbors on Leeds Pond, not the residents of the Village of Plandome Manor, not the wildlife that relies on the pond, not the water quality of Manhasset Bay, and certainly not the future of our precious coastal ecosystem.

Ultimately, wouldn't making it known that village codes will be enforced help preserve a sense of community cohesion, along with the environment?

Thank you for your attention,
Amelia Amon

link to 2014 report:

<https://dos.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/04/coastal-resiliency-and-water-quality-on-long-island.pdf>