



New York State  
Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

CAROL ASH  
Commissioner

DAVID A. PATERSON  
Governor

AGENCY DECISION  
AND  
STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

**Adoption of Final Master Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement for  
Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve  
Designation of a Park Preserve  
Designation of a Natural Heritage Area**

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation has prepared a Final Master Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS), dated June 2, 2010 for Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve located in the Village of Lloyd Harbor, Town of Huntington in Suffolk County.

By the authority vested in me in State Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Law, I do hereby adopt the Final Master Plan / FEIS for Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve. I also designate the park as a Park Preserve within the New York State Park Preserve System. In accordance with its designation as a Preserve, the park shall hereinafter be named Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve and the Final Master Plan / FEIS has been revised to reflect the new name. A portion of the preserve, as detailed in the Master Plan, is also designated a Natural Heritage Area.

This decision is based on the Findings Statement and the content of the Final Master Plan/ FEIS, which have been prepared according to the provisions of Part 617, the regulations implementing Article 8 of Environmental Conservation Law - the State Environmental Quality Review Act.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Carol Ash  
Commissioner  
NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date *Aug 19 - 2010*

**SEQR FINDINGS STATEMENT**  
**Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve Final Master Plan / FEIS**

**June 25, 2010**

Pursuant to Article 8 (State Environmental Quality Review Act – SEQRA) of the Environmental Conservation Law and 6 NYCRR Part 617, the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), as lead agency, makes the following findings.

**Title of the Action:**

Adoption and Implementation of a Final Master Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve

**Location:**

Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve is located in the Village of Lloyd Harbor, Town of Huntington, Suffolk County, NY.

**Description of the Action:**

The final Master Plan for Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve provides long term guidance for the development and management of the preserve and protection of its resources as summarized below.

**Date of Completion of the Final EIS:** June 2, 2010

**Findings:**

1. These findings consider the relevant environmental impacts, facts and conclusions disclosed in the final EIS; weigh and balance relevant environmental impacts with social, economic and other considerations; provide a rationale for the agency's decision; certify that the requirements of 6 NYCRR Part 617 have been met; and certify that consistent with social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the action is one which avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable, and that included within the plan are those mitigation measures that will avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable.
2. The Final Plan/FEIS was subject to a complete Environmental Impact Statement process including a public information meeting and a public hearing.
3. The Final Environmental Impact Statement contains a chapter on responses to comments on the Draft EIS. This chapter contains clarification of issues raised during the review of

the Draft EIS. It also provides information that has been used in the preparation of the Final Master Plan/FEIS.

4. The park preserve is located in the Village of Lloyd Harbor and the Town of Huntington within the Long Island State Park Region. It contains approximately 1550 acres of which about 250 are developed and 150 acres are successional old field, with the balance being natural areas. Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve is home to a wealth of historic, natural, geologic, archeological, and pre-historic resources. While the park preserve is defined by its historic structures and landscapes, it also has open fields, forest communities, trails, a 12-acre freshwater pond named Fresh Pond, and an 89-acre low salt marsh.
5. The general topography of the park preserve is flat with rolling hills and steep slopes near the bluffs at the shoreline. The ecological communities of the park preserve consist of salt marshes to mature terrestrial forests.
6. Caumsett is on the National Register of Historic Places and is recognized for its historic structures and landscape.
7. Recreational resources in the park preserve include equestrian, hiking, biking, fishing, and SCUBA diving. Caumsett is open year-round with winter activities including snowshoeing and cross country skiing. The park preserve is home to the Lloyd Harbor Historical Society, Volunteers for Wildlife, Nassau County BOCES, the Caumsett Foundation, and the equestrian center.
8. The plan identifies a vision statement and goals for the park preserve. The vision statement is: Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve will continue to be a place for visitors to enjoy passive recreational opportunities while, at the same time, affording visitors the chance to enjoy and appreciate the natural and cultural resources of an historic former estate on Long Island's North Shore. The overall goal is to: Achieve a balance between recreation and the protection of natural and cultural resources of Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve while making available compatible public environmental and historic education and interpretive programs.
9. The plan presents a series of "preferred alternatives" for future development and operation of Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve. Cumulatively, the actions described in the plan present OPRHP's long-term vision for the rehabilitation and enhancement of the park preserve.
10. Status quo alternatives were evaluated for each element of the plan as well as other feasible alternatives. The Preferred Alternative combines the preferred options for recreation development and resource protection into one that best meets the goals for the park preserve. This alternative represents the Final Master Plan.

11. The final Master Plan considers the historic, cultural, natural, geological, and recreational resources of the park preserve and responds to the needs and safety of patrons, protection of cultural and natural resources, and principles of sustainability. It also details the park preserve classification, designation, recreation and stewardship elements. The plan also prioritizes implementation actions and recognizes that implementation will be dependent on public and private funding.
12. Article 20 of the Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law outlines the process for designation of entire parks or portions of parks as part of a statewide Park Preserve system. The purpose of such a designation is to conserve and protect park lands containing wildlife, flora, scenic, historic and archeological sites that are unique and rare in New York State. In addition to providing legal protection to all of the park's resources, designating the Park as a preserve would come with restricting the creation of developed areas. Under the master plan, Caumsett will be designated a Park Preserve. This designation is consistent with the type and extent of use in the plan and will encourage the study and interpretation of environmental resources.
13. Article 5 - Title 11 - Section 0539 of the NYS Environmental Conservation Law calls for the dedication of state-owned lands with rare species and/or significant natural communities as Natural Heritage Areas (NHA). These lands must meet certain criteria identified within the law. Caumsett was evaluated by the NY Natural Heritage Program and a NHA will be designated for approximately 900 acres of the park preserve and will be located in the north and eastern woodland areas of the preserve. Designating this area as a NHA recognizes the importance of the most significant ecological communities within the park preserve.
14. The plan provides protection of natural resources through several means including: management measures for the low salt marsh, maritime beach ecosystems and Fresh Pond; control strategies for invasive species management, and management measures for successional fields, woodlands and rare bird species that nest in the preserve.
15. Measures to protect and interpret cultural and historic resources in the park preserve include: development of Historic Structure Reports for several buildings; development of a Cultural Landscape Report; development of an Archeological Resource Survey; rehabilitation of several historic gardens from the Field Era of the estate; opening the Power and Pump House for historic interpretation of the Field Era; stabilization and rehabilitation of the Greenhouses to be used for passive recreation or interpretation; seeking proposals from potential licensees to operate two vacant structures – Main House and the Winter Cottage – as well as consideration of opening these buildings for interpretation and exhibit space; and interpretation of the dairy history of Caumsett by opening sections of the Farm Group.
16. The plan also contains several recreation facility development recommendations including creating a permit system to allow launch of car-top watercraft which will

enhance recreational access to Long Island Sound; and expanding, marking, and improving the existing trail system, and closure of certain trails in appropriate locations.

17. Park preserve operations, maintenance and infrastructure will be improved, including: entrance, parking and vehicular access modifications including making stormwater and landscaping improvements and development of three small new pervious paved parking areas; closing the exit near the Henry Lloyd House; improvements to way-finding signage and trail signage; reconfiguration of the Farm Group area including creating a Visitor Center in one or more of the vacant structures and relocating the office and public restrooms; improvements to the equestrian center including the parking area, renovating non-historic structures with structures consistent with Caumsett's architecture, and upgrading electrical utilities; development of written guidelines for the types and size of special events that are appropriate in the park (such as equestrian and running events) and operational guidelines to ensure the integrity of the preserve's resources are not compromised.
18. In addition, the plan recognizes that significant capital expenditures will be needed to maintain and rehabilitate the park preserve's underlying infrastructure. Capital, maintenance and operational projects will be prioritized and scheduled in three phases as identified in the plan, subject to reorganization. The initiation and completion of priority phases will depend upon public and private funding.
19. Impacts associated with the implementation of the plan and mitigation measures identified are as follows:

Beneficial impacts of Master Plan implementation include renovation, restoration and interpretation of historic resources at the park preserve, improvements in patron safety, enhancement of recreation facilities and restoration of natural vegetation and ecological communities. Buildings will be restored in accordance with the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

- New and restored buildings will be accessible, more energy efficient and will meet current building codes. Patron health and safety will also be improved by improving traffic flow and pedestrian routes.
- The plan will result in substantial beneficial recreation impacts by providing for a variety of new and improved visitor amenities. The improved trail network will provide a better visitor experience by creating an organized trail system with designated trail uses and improved signage. A new visitor center, preserve office, public access to historic buildings including the Main House, and access improvements will provide improved visitor services, while also incorporating sustainable design.
- The importance of the natural resources within Caumsett is recognized with the designation of the park as Park Preserve. Designation of a Park Preserve confirms the agency's commitment to retaining the natural and cultural character of Caumsett. In general, designation raises recognition of Caumsett as providing valuable open space

and important ecological and historic resources in this developed region. Park Preserve law calls for management of a park so designated to conduct scientific studies; preserve the integrity of its resources; restore and maintain historical and archeological sites; and provide for the management of all unique, rare, threatened or endangered species of flora and fauna. Necessary facilities including offices, roads, paths, environmental centers and parking areas may still be provided, as long as these constitute no more than fifteen percent of the land area of the park preserve.

- The importance of the natural resources within the park preserve will be further recognized with the designation of portions of the preserve as a NHA. This NHA designation will help guide future management of the most significant natural resources in the preserve and provide additional support to carry out natural resource recommendations in the plan. The designation of these areas in the Master Plan confirms the agency's commitment to retaining their natural character and condition.
- There will be some physical change to the land, particularly where additional parking will be provided and trails constructed or segments of trails relocated. New facilities will be located in primarily open, previously disturbed areas and require little ground disturbance. New trail sections may require some vegetation removal and grading. Disturbance will be limited primarily to the required width of the trail corridor.
- Some additional impervious surfaces will be added to improve access and parking. This will be balanced with providing pervious surfaces where operationally feasible and providing landscape, drainage improvements and bio-filtration swales.
- Short term temporary impacts that may occur as a result of master plan implementation could include a minor temporary increase in vehicle exhaust and some generation of dust during construction. Air quality impacts from construction vehicles will be mitigated by assuring that these vehicles are in good running condition and are not producing excessive exhaust. It is expected that the plan will be implemented over a period of time and such impacts will be temporary and localized to the specific work areas. There will also be temporary adverse (i.e., construction machinery, etc.) associated with construction of proposed improvements.
- Plan implementation will result in construction activities that could temporarily result in movement of soils and sediment, especially following storms. Soil erosion and stormwater runoff will be limited by several measures including the construction of vegetated swales, restoration of natural vegetation and new plantings, preparation of erosion control plans, use of Best Management Practices, and adherence to the conditions of any applicable SPDES General Permits.
- Native plants in the preserve will benefit from the plan through invasive plant species management activities. A Cultural Landscape Report will provide the information and framework to manage the historic landscape and recognize its significance. Landscapes will be restored in accordance with Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes. The preserve provides significant natural habitats; these and other important habitats in the preserve will be protected and enhanced. The plan includes natural resource protection strategies which provide a framework for enhancement and continued protection of the low salt marsh, maritime beach and Fresh Pond, as well as development of a grassland management

plan for habitat restoration to enhance old fields for benefits to animals such as birds and butterflies.

- The park preserve contains a large number of major historic structures and OPRHP will continue its work repairing and restoring them. Appropriate uses will be sought for buildings that are currently not used or are underutilized, in order to provide for their appropriate restoration. Improved signage and interpretive materials throughout the park preserve will highlight its history and importance. Any project that could affect the cultural or historic resources of the park preserve will be reviewed by OPRHP's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in compliance with the State Historic Preservation Act, as well as the Bureau of Historic Sites. Any recommendations or mitigation measures provided by SHPO or Historic Sites will be implemented.
  - Scenic resources, both the formal landscapes and the natural settings, will be protected and maintained through the actions recommended in the plan.
  - Public health and safety are an important element in park preserve operations. Facility design and development will meet all applicable health and safety codes as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act.
  - Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve is within the coastal area and within an approved Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP) for Lloyd Harbor. As discussed within the final Master Plan-FEIS, the plan is consistent with the coastal policies identified in the LWRP, as well as with the Long Island Sound Coastal Management Program.
  - The park preserve is located within the Long Island North Shore Heritage Area (LINSHA) and is consistent with the LINSHA management plan. The Master Plan and preferred alternatives will preserve the heritage and historical resources of LINSHA including the Native American and colonial historical resources found within Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve. The Master Plan includes actions that will protect the environmental, natural and maritime resources such as managing the important salt marsh complex, controlling invasive species and designating Caumsett as a park preserve and also an NHA within the preserve.
  - The Master Plan is also consistent with the principles of ecosystem-based management which provide guidance for the improvement, preservation and restoration of ecosystems and their watersheds and include: a place-based focus for activities and their impacts, scientific foundations for decision making, measurable objectives which allow for adaptive management, interconnections between activities and ecosystems, and local knowledge and partnerships to advance preservation, protection and restoration of ecosystems.
20. The plan describes the process for supplemental environmental review. The plan also provides for guidance as to when additional environmental review may be required and identifies the types of actions that are likely to require additional review. These include new actions not addressed with the final Master Plan/FEIS that are not Type II actions within Part 617, any change from the preferred alternative for recreational and facility elements of the plan that would result in significant adverse environmental impacts and

any leases, easements or other agreements between OPRHP and other entities that would affect resources in a manner that is not adequately addressed in the final Master Plan/FEIS. Specific elements of the plan are also identified that will be evaluated as to the need for additional review dependent on the outcome of more detailed planning.