

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

WILLIAM R. SPENCER
SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATOR

EIGHTEENTH DISTRICT
15 PARK CIRCLE, SUITE 209
CENTERPORT, NY 11721



CONTACT: **ELIZABETH ALEXANDER**
LEGISLATIVE AIDE

OFFICE: 631-854-4500

Elizabeth.Alexander@suffolkcountyny.gov

MEDIA RELEASE

July 20, 2015



From left to right: Northport Village Trustee Damon McMullen, Centerport Yacht Club Member Brian Whitehead, Executive Director of Citizens Campaign for the Environment and Co-Chair of the Northport Harbor Water Quality Protection Committee Adrienne Esposito, Northport Village Deputy Mayor Henry Tobin, Legislator William R. Spencer, Northport Village Trustee Ian Milligan, Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, Highway Superintendent Peter Gunther, Huntington Town Supervisor Frank Petrone, Huntington Councilman Gene Cook, NYS Assemblyman Andrew Raia, Vision Long Island Director Eric Alexander

Beach Re-Opens After 7 Years!

Centerport, NY - Aggressive water quality clean-up efforts have paid off for the Centerport Yacht Club (CYC) Beach as it officially re-opened after being shut down seven years ago due to water quality concerns. Today, Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone and Legislator William R. Spencer, along with Northport Village, town and state officials, hand delivered the permit to the community and re-opened the beach with a ribbon cutting ceremony!

“Permitting the opening of this beach is significant because it proves the positive impact we can have on our community and environment when all the stakeholders get together and work as a team. No bathing beach, permanently closed due to poor water quality, has been reopened in recent decades, until today with opening the Centerport Yacht Club Beach! Because of collaborative efforts, 300 families can now enjoy their beach after a 7 year closure,” stated William R. Spencer, M.D.

For months, the Suffolk County Department of Health Services, with the oversight by the New York State Department of Health has been conducting extensive data collection at the beach and throughout the harbor complex. Over 600 tests in 20 locations at the beach have been completed since April, and the results have found that the quality of the water meets the required stringent standards, making way for the issuance of the beach permit.

This great news is another result of the ongoing progress made in tackling the water quality challenges faced in the 18th Legislative District and all of Suffolk County. Northport Harbor, once the epicenter of red-tide in the Northeast, has seen substantial improvements to water quality thanks to collaborative efforts by all levels of government and community groups to reduce pollution in the harbor complex. A big part of the progress can be attributed to the upgrades to the Northport Sewage Treatment Plant. These efforts have yielded positive results that the beach and the entire harbor complex are benefitting from. In the last three seasons, there has been no red-tide in the harbor and the amount of nitrogen that was being released, which had been 19.4 lbs. per day, has been reduced to 7.5 lbs. per day.

“Recognizing that Suffolk County and collaborating agencies have taken steps to improve the water quality in Northport Harbor, including the establishment of the Northport Harbor Water Quality Protection Committee and upgrades to the Village of Northport waste water treatment facility and collection system under the County’s Reclaim Our Water Initiative, I am happy to announce that the bathing beach at the Centerport Yacht Club will be open for the 2015 season. I thank Legislator William Spencer for his continual and steadfast advocacy on behalf of the community,” stated County Executive Steve Bellone.

“The reopening of the Centerport Yacht Club’s beach demonstrates how various levels of government, environmental groups and private citizens can work together to identify the causes of a problem and its solutions. That is what the Northport Harbor Water Quality Protection Committee did when it looked at what caused the Yacht Club Beach’s closure, and Legislator Spencer got the county approval for funding that helped implement a major solution: the upgrade of the Northport Sewer Plant. This is a momentous day in which we all can celebrate having a role,” said Huntington Supervisor Frank P. Petrone.

“It was great to see the reopening of another swimming area in our community. This is a prime example of what can happen when all levels of Government come together to work alongside our local community groups. I am elated to see that our hard work has helped to ensure these improvements in water quality within our harbors,” stated Assemblyman Andrew Raia.

The progress made in the pollution mitigation efforts can also be attributed to improvements to storm water discharge pipes at the head of the harbor. Educational programs on best practices for lawn care, provision of dog bags and street sweeping programs have all made positive contributions to reducing pollutant in the waterways.

Joe Morency, past Centerport Yacht Club Commodore, stated, “Today is not just a milestone for a beach, but a milestone for the entire Huntington-Northport Harbor complex.”

“This collaborative effort, led by Suffolk County engaging with the Town of Huntington, Village of Northport and community organizations to develop water quality improvements, is clearly showing results. The improvements to the Northport STP, while only part of the contributing factors that led to the closing of the beach are paying dividends. Too often infrastructure dollars do not find their way to local communities-this one did-and it shows what can happen when government works for local folks,” stated Eric Alexander Director of Vison Long Island.

“As you can see, these accomplishments have been no small feat and it is because of our comprehensive approach we are seeing success in our initiative to *Reclaim our Water*. Our work is not done; we must move forward in our efforts to protect our waterways. I assure you that this will remain a priority of mine and we will continue to benefit from our efforts,” concluded Legislator “Doc” Spencer.

###