



**UPDATED WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
FOR MANHASSET BAY**

**FINAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH & PARTICIPATION PLAN  
JULY 2023**

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## 1.0 Introduction

This Community Outreach & Participation Plan has been prepared by the Manhasset Bay Protection Committee (MBPC), with funding from the New York State Department of State (NYS DOS) under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund, and technical assistance from Nelson, Pope & Voorhis, LLC (NPV). The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the outreach methods and protocol standards for obtaining and utilizing input from community members to assist in the preparation of the updated Manhasset Bay Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP). The MBPC is building upon the goals and objectives of the Manhasset Bay WQIP completed in 1999, in three phases: 1) inventory natural resources and land uses within the watershed of Manhasset Bay; 2) assess natural features, physical conditions, existing water pollution controls and ordinances pertaining to the Bay and its watershed; and 3) develop a program of recommendations to enhance water quality conditions in the Bay, including an evaluation of the status of projects recommended in the 1999 WQIP.

The Long Island Sound Study recognizes that Manhasset Bay was an important resource for fishing and shellfish harvesting used by the Algonquin Matinecock tribe in the 1600s, and subsequently served as the largest oystering harbor on the North Shore of Long Island in the late 1800s, nicknaming the Bay as “the shellfish garden of New York City.” Manhasset Bay continues to support commercial and recreational boating uses today, while also being designated as a Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife habitat, providing significant feeding and nursery habitat for striped bass, winter flounder, bluefish, menhaden, and other forage species. Additionally, the Bay has been identified by the Long Island Sound Study as a Stewardship area, providing nesting areas for Least Tern, a threatened species in New York, and acting as one of five major waterfowl winter areas on the North Shore of Long Island.

The water quality of Manhasset Bay has been significantly impacted due to stormwater runoff discharges and groundwater underflow generated in the surrounding watershed, along with prevalent recreational boating activities. While the 1999 WQIP outlined projects that could improve Manhasset Bay’s water quality and reduce contaminant inputs, the updated plan being prepared by the MBPC seeks to identify progress that has been made through completed projects, investigate projects that have not been completed to determine if they are still suitable, and identify additional projects and other actions that can protect Manhasset Bay and its wildlife and habitats, while also preserving its aesthetic and recreational appeals.



Community outreach and participation is crucial to the success of the updated Manhasset Bay WQIP, as residents and other community members have local knowledge and insight on issues and potential solutions for the Bay and its watershed. Community members will be engaged in learning additional information about Manhasset Bay and what a watershed is, as well as how upland and boating uses can impact both the Bay and the community.

**2.0 Manhasset Bay Protection Committee**

The MBPC was established in the spring of 1998 with the goal of improving the quality of Manhasset Bay’s waters and its watershed. Shortly thereafter, the MBPC was awarded an Environmental Protection Fund grant from New York State to prepare its first WQIP, which was completed in 1999. At the time of the 1999 WQIP, there were eleven local municipalities that voluntarily joined the MBPC, which subsequently was expanded to fifteen municipal members, as listed below:

<b>Members of the Manhasset Bay Protection Committee</b>
County of Nassau
Town of North Hempstead
Village of Baxter Estates
Village of Flower Hill
Village of Great Neck
Village of Kensington
Village of Kings Point
Village of Manorhaven
Village of Munsey Park
Village of Plandome
Village of Plandome Heights
Village of Plandome Manor
Village of Port Washington North
Village of Sands Point
Village of Thomaston

The MBPC is engaged to prepare the Updated WQIP for Manhasset Bay and will function as the Project Steering Committee. Along with the Executive Director, whose contact information is provided on the cover of this document, each member municipality has a representative who participates in MBPC activities on behalf of their respective community and who will contribute to the preparation of the updated WQIP as part of the Steering Committee. The work of the MBPC in preparing the WQIP, including this Community Outreach & Participation Plan, is being



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overseen by the representatives identified below. It is noted that the Town of North Hempstead has been awarded the contract that has been issued by the State to prepare the updated WQIP and is managing that grant on behalf of the MBPC.

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Sarah Deonarine	Executive Director, Manhasset Bay Protection Committee	mbpcexec@gmail.com
Kevin Braun	MBPC and Town of North Hempstead, Environmental Control Specialist	braunk@northhempsteadny.gov

NPV will prepare all work products related to this Community Outreach & Public Participation Program, with guidance and input, and final sign-off, from the MBPC (and NYSDOS). The MBPC will serve as the point of contact for communication with the community.

### 3.0 Public Participation Techniques

Key stakeholders and members of the public will be invited to participate in the Manhasset Bay WQIP discussion and planning process through outreach meetings, where community members can gather (either in person or through an online forum) and express their concerns regarding the water quality within the Bay, discuss completed projects and if notable progress has been made, identify more changes they would like to see in their communities and other potential solutions they would like to see to reduce pollution within Manhasset Bay and the watershed. It is expected at this time that the WQIP outreach initiative will include the following sample organizations and others:

- Elected officials
- Libraries
- School districts
- Science Museum of Long Island
- Long Island Sound Study
- Local civic associations
- Local environmental organizations such as the Waterfront Advisory Committee, Marine-focused groups, etc.

*(A separate list of all the groups to be contacted will be prepared prior to and for use in outreach for the first public workshop and other community engagement)*



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The preliminary public outreach list above will be expanded/refined as the project progresses. The specific methods of outreach to facilitate public engagement are outlined in the following sections of this document.

### 3.1 Information Techniques

Manhasset Bay Protection Committee Website – The MBPC website contains numerous resources that community members can utilize to learn more about the Bay, including the history of the MBPC, the 1999 Manhasset Bay WQIP document, how community members can do their part to reduce contaminants entering the Bay, and ways to volunteer and get involved with events planned by the MBPC. The website includes a link specifically devoted to the updated WQIP (<https://manhassetbayprotectioncommittee.org/wqip.html>) which includes an email address for the receipt of public comments ([baycomments@gmail.com](mailto:baycomments@gmail.com)).

Town of North Hempstead Website and Television Station – The Town’s homepage includes a series of current news items which can include updates on the WQIP. The Town’s television station, NHTV, is accessible at <https://www.mynhtv.com> and provides a range of public information broadcasting of interest to the community. The MBPC can also create a video loop(s) with information on the WQIP, which can be made available for play at marinas and other appropriate locations.

Email – The MBPC will send emails to interested community members regarding upcoming meetings, volunteer activities within Manhasset Bay and the watershed area, and status updates on local projects such as wetland reconstruction, stormwater runoff mitigation, and other actions to improve the overall water quality of the Bay. Emails will be sent to stakeholders, based on a list compiled by the MBPC, as appropriate. The MBPC also prepares a newsletter which is distributed to a list of subscribers who have been receiving, and will continue to receive, WQIP information.

Press Releases – Both MBPC and the Town of North Hempstead have relationships with the print media. Press releases will be prepared with information on notable events and milestones for the WQIP.

Social Media – Social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook) will be used to spread information regarding Project status and public meetings throughout the process of preparing the updated Manhasset Bay WQIP and provide updates on projects and activities within Manhasset Bay and the watershed. The MBPC manages a Twitter account, and both the MBPC and the Town of North Hempstead manage Facebook pages on which this information can be posted.



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Informational Fliers – Handouts and brochures will be made available at public events and/or community meetings to further engage and educate participants; and such informational materials will be made available at key public locations, such as libraries, schools, and municipal offices (especially Town and Village Halls). Fliers and handouts also will be provided as downloadable PDFs on the MBPC web site for wider availability.

Signage – Suitable signage will be posted at public locations or in informational kiosks or other formats to alert the public to WQIP activities also covered by any of the other media described above.

### 3.2 Interactive Techniques

Community Meetings – Public meetings will be conducted in a manner that maximizes attendance and participation by all interested members of the Manhasset Bay community. MBPC will coordinate with key stakeholders to minimize the potential for scheduling conflicts with other local events. These meetings can be held in-person, in a virtual format (through Zoom or another online meeting platform), or in hybrid format to be determined by the Committee. The purpose will be to gather community input, information, and ideas for the updated WQIP. An open public comment period will be publicized. Three community meetings are planned at this time, described as follows:

- The first public meeting will be held during the initial characterization of Manhasset Bay and the watershed. This meeting will provide a platform to introduce the project and gather input from community members on issues they face related to water quality in Manhasset Bay and its watershed, as well as the draft WQIP Vision and Goals. Informational surveys or comment cards can be distributed to the attendees at an in-person meeting, and/or an exit survey or online forum can be created to gather feedback and responses to questions from online participants. It is anticipated that the first public outreach meeting will be held in the early fall 2023, after the summer vacation season, when school is back in session.
- The second community meeting will be directed primarily at providing an update of Project activities that have been completed since the initial community meeting, and to gather input on a preliminary list of recommended projects and programs for the improvement of Manhasset Bay and the watershed. In conjunction with the second meeting, a proposed sequence and timeline for Projects will be provided and discussed with the attendees to identify priorities. It is anticipated that the second public outreach meeting will be held approximately four months after the first public meeting.



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- The third community meeting will be geared primarily for receiving feedback on the full draft updated Manhasset Bay WQIP. A presentation will be provided to summarize the WQIP and an extended public comment period will be provided to receive additional written input on the WQIP. It is anticipated that the third public outreach meeting will be held approximately four months after the second public meeting.

*(The timeline for public meetings may be subject to change. The meetings are interdependent on the type of feedback received, the coordination and response strategy that the MBPC chooses to take and the time necessary to adequately prepare for the workshops so that they can achieve the outcomes intended in the planning process).*

Surveys – Surveys may be used to gather information from the community in a more broad-based format. Community members who are interested in being involved in the WQIP discussions but may not be able to attend scheduled meetings can still participate in the process by sharing their insight and opinions in these online surveys. Links to surveys will be shared on social media platforms, through emails, and on the MBPC website and other means.

Citizen Engagement – The MBPC will organize events that are centered around volunteer opportunities and awareness of water quality issues within Manhasset Bay and the watershed and will participate in already-scheduled events such as festivals, street fairs or Earth Day events (such as has successfully been sponsored by the Port Washington Library). These events can serve multiple purposes by providing an opportunity to receive input on the WQIP, while also educating attendees about why continued efforts are necessary to preserve the ecological integrity and aesthetic appeal of the Bay.

#### References

- Long Island Sound Study (2012). “Manhasset Bay,” <https://longislandsoundstudy.net/2012/11/manhasset-bay/>
- Manhasset Bay Protection Committee (1999) “Manhasset Bay Water Quality Improvement Plan” [https://manhassetbayprotectioncommittee.org/uploads/1/3/7/6/137685843/manhasset\\_bay\\_water\\_quality\\_improvement\\_plan\\_1999.pdf](https://manhassetbayprotectioncommittee.org/uploads/1/3/7/6/137685843/manhasset_bay_water_quality_improvement_plan_1999.pdf)