

# Wyandanch

Community Advisory Board

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## Upcoming Events

Plastic Free Lunch (TBD)

Wyandanch Plaza Saturday events in August

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[NYSHECK website](#)



## 10 Years After Sandy: How the Carlls River Project Will Protect Babylon From Future Superstorms

*This fall marks the 10 year anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, in which hundreds of towns, including Wyandanch, experienced immense infrastructure damage and flooding. Carlls River, which borders Wyandanch, is prone to flooding, as well as pollution from lawn chemicals, septic systems, and other toxic chemicals. Suffolk's Resiliency Initiative is replacing septic tanks with new sewers, preventing contamination and strengthening the river's resilience. The project will also protect Suffolk County, including Wyandanch, from the flooding effects of future superstorms.*

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**S**uperstorm Sandy left more than 64,000 homes and businesses structurally damaged and destroyed in Suffolk County alone. In Babylon, like many other neighboring towns, the storm left flooding, fallen trees, and power outages.

The Clean Water for Carlls River project is just the start of efforts to produce coastal resilience and provide clean water for towns like Wyandanch. Our coasts are vulnerable to sea-level rise and heavy storms, which can result in flooding and destruction of infrastructure. Coastal Resilience provides infrastructure for a community to "bounce back" after hazardous environmental events such as hurricanes, coastal storms, and flooding. Suffolk's resilience is based on the ability to prevent a short-term hazard event from turning into a long-term community wide disaster.

# Poor water quality, especially nitrogen pollution, has reached a near-crisis point in many coastal areas of Long Island.

Nitrogen pollution is caused by an excess of the otherwise-beneficial nutrient that is found in aquatic ecosystems. For example, synthetic lawn fertilizers contain nitrogen that is transported by rainwater into local water bodies. An abundance of nitrogen can cause algae to grow faster than rivers, lakes, and bays can handle.

Septic tanks are a second and even more prominent source of nitrogen and water pollution.



*Groundbreaking ceremony, fall 2021*

The most effective solution for this nitrogen pollution in high-density suburban communities with individual disposal systems, like Wyandanch, is the installation of sewage collection and treatment systems. Sewers will aid in reducing groundwater contamination from existing septic systems that have been damaged from past storms. Improved drainage will also reduce local flooding.

**Approximately 70% of Suffolk County's 1.5 million residents have an on-site sanitary wastewater treatment system. Many are failing.**

These systems consist of a septic tank or cesspool for solids, connected to cesspools to allow clarified water to seep into the ground. Cesspools are pits with concrete block walls. Wastewater flows into the cesspool and drains into the soil through perforated walls.

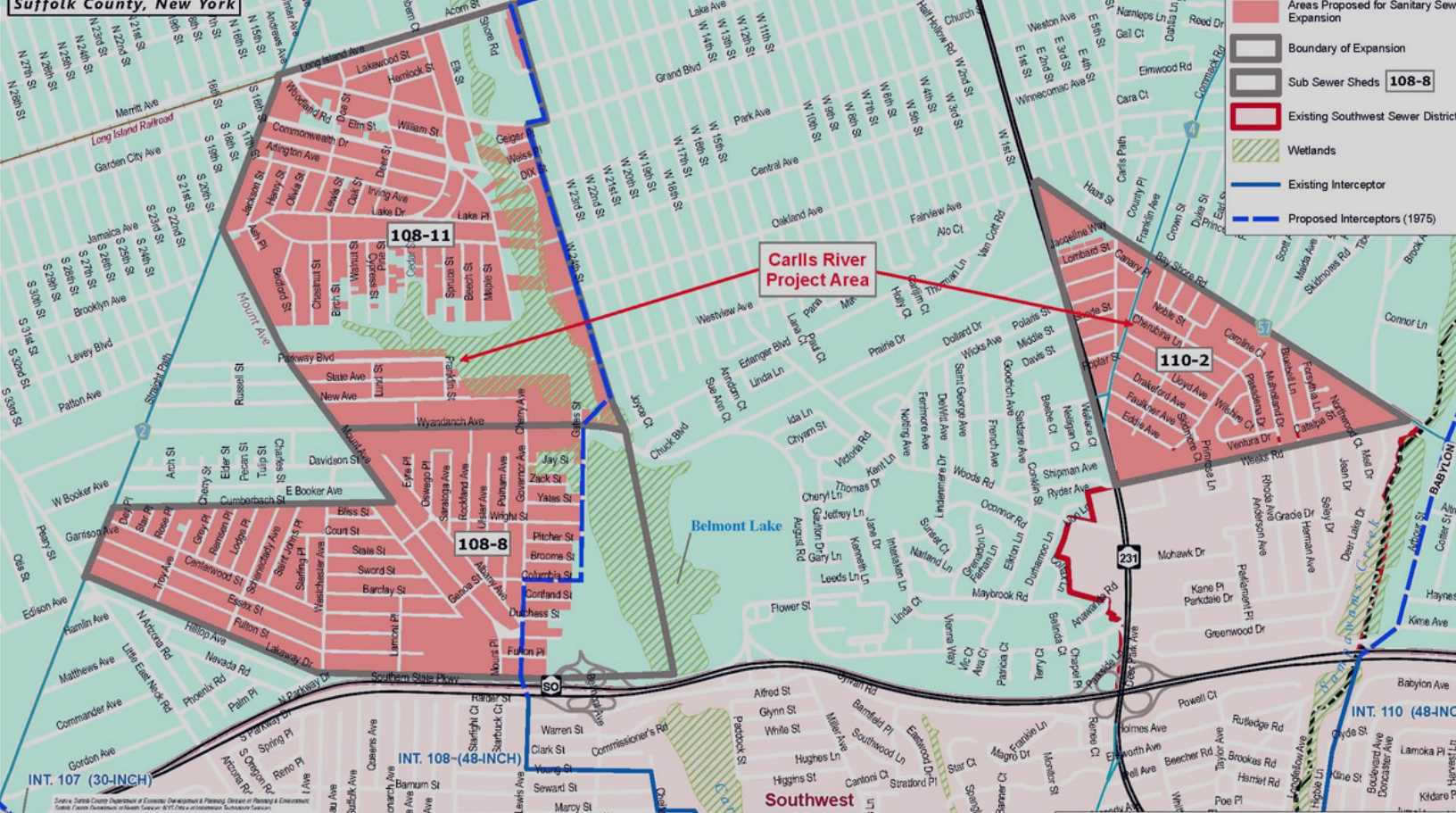
## Summer safety

*Go outside!* In Japanese, **shirin-yoku**, the act (and art!) of forest-bathing, has both physical and mental health benefits. Connect with nature by spending time outdoors with your loved ones.



**Sunscreen:** oxybenzone, a chemical found in most sunscreens, is linked to increased rates of obesity and cancer. It also harms coral reefs. Therefore, aim to buy **mineral sunscreens**.

**Bug spray:** to minimize chemical exposure, opt for **essential oils** like lemon eucalyptus oil, cinnamon oil, and thyme oil.



Many on-site septic systems in established communities are more than 40 years old. At this age, failure rates have increased dramatically, especially when high groundwater conditions exist. The high density of smaller, older homes, coupled with high groundwater tables, is cause for concern.

Failing onsite systems contribute to groundwater contamination from microorganisms, heavy metals, organic compounds, nutrients, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals from personal care products. When a resident of a Northern town, including Wyandanch, flushes their toilet, their water and any contaminants they may flush end up in the Great South Bay as a result. Surface water quality is also a major concern. Contaminated groundwater poses human health and environmental concerns. The new sewers will transport wastewater to the Bergin Point facility in West Babylon.

**The Carlls River is the fourth largest river on Long Island.** Carlls River hosts a number of valuable ecosystems and is a recreational treasure for Suffolk County. The Carlls River Project will reduce nitrogen entering the groundwater by 78 percent; Carlls River will see a 31 percent reduction. Reductions in nitrogen other pollutants will also improve Belmont Lake and Great South Bay.

Home owners in the red zones on the map above must register with Suffolk County to be connected to the new sewer lines. Wyandanch is within these redzones. **There can be significant financial benefits for registering now.**

In 2019, the Suffolk County Legislature released a Superstorm Sandy Task Force that aimed to reflect on the past to prepare for the future. Emphasizing how the Carlls River project can address rebuilding after Sandy, County Executive Steve Bellone stated "One of the principle fronts on which the County has already taken action is to reduce the nitrogen loading that has contributed to the degradation of our second line of defense against storm surges – the wetlands. The Suffolk County Coastal Resiliency Initiative is applying substantial federal and state grants to connect key South Shore communities that currently do not treat their wastewater to sewers." In other parts of Suffolk County, a program through Reclaim Our Water extends "grants from the state and county to homeowners so they can afford to replace non-performing cesspools and septic tanks with innovative, alternative on-site waste systems that greatly reduce nitrogen emissions."

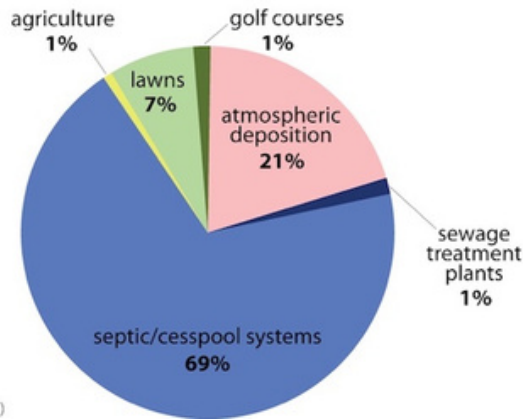


*Hurricane Sandy left lots of damage throughout Long Island*

<https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/super-storm-sandy-damage-gm981662416-266602702>

The town expects, as a result of the task force report, that there will be "further impetus to more completely prepare Suffolk County for future storm events and grid against sea-level rise," (Bellone).

## Nitrogen Sources in the Great South Bay



With the future reduction of nitrogen, the quality of life for all residents will be improved. By investing in infrastructure that will improve water quality for years to come, the project will improve local environmental quality, including our ecosystems, and reduce flooding from future storms - addressing the legacy of Sandy.

***Through these efforts, Wyandanch and neighboring communities will prosper, improving total wellness.***

## External Links

1. <https://greaterlongisland.com/county-breaks-ground-on-carlls-river-sewer-expansion-project-in-babylon-town/>  
(Photo, page 2)
2. <https://www.townofbabylon.com/404/Carlls-River-Sewer-Extension-Project> (Photo, page 3)
3. <https://www.cleanwaterforcarllsriver.com> (Photos, page 1 and 5)
4. <https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/issue>
5. <https://www.bestproducts.com/parenting/kids/g1387/natural-bug-repellent/>
6. <https://www.ewg.org/sunscreen/>
7. <https://www.scnylegislature.us/DocumentCenter/View/67979/10302019-Superstorm-Sandy-Review-Task-Force-Report-October-2019-PDF>
8. <https://townofbabylon.com/DocumentCenter/View/2180/Final-Section-0-LR?bidId=>
9. <https://www.newsday.com/long-island/suffolk/sewer-cesspools-hookup-fees-school-district-k25042>
10. <https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/super-storm-sandy-damage-gm981662416-266602702> (Photo, page 4)