



THE LEGISLATURE  
STATE OF NEW YORK

February 5, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul  
Governor of New York State  
NYS Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

**RE: Downtown Montauk and Ditch Plains, Montauk**

Dear Governor Hochul:

As the State representatives for the Montauk community, including Ditch Plains, we contact you regarding a matter of the utmost concern to public safety.

The above referenced areas have been battered and damaged by repeated storms over the past several months. Specifically, storm events on December 18, 2023, January 9–10, 2024, and January 12, 2024, have put these areas at grave risk of catastrophic harm from future storms. We are only halfway through the current winter season.

First, we note that Downtown Montauk is part of an imminent federal project under the Fire Island to Montauk Point (FIMP) project. It is imperative that the needed repairs necessitated by the impacts of the recent storms be incorporated into the currently approved work plan for this project as outlined in the Town's attached letter of January 26<sup>th</sup>. The damage from these storms has been surveyed and reviewed by the State DEC. The inclusion of these additions is imperative to ensure the ultimate success of this shoreline protection project.

Second, the Ditch Plains area is not included as part of the pending federal project. Repeated requests to the United State Army Corps of Engineers to include this area in FIMP have been rejected as not meeting federal criteria. Regardless, as can be seen from the attached photographs, the Ditch Plains area faces imminent danger from any future coastal storm. The beach profile in this area is now non-existent. There has been flooding and damage to homes and infrastructure.

The Town of East Hampton is currently evaluating implementing its own project at Ditch Plains to augment the federal efforts at shoreline protection at Montauk. The Town will shortly be producing a plan to address immediate and short-term needs at Ditch Plains. The Town would seek to work with the contractor undertaking the federal project to greatly reduce mobilization costs.

February 5, 2024  
Governor Hochul  
Page 2

The Town is to be commended for this effort. However, it will be an unexpected and substantial cost for the Town to undertake. Consequently, we are requesting state financial involvement in this project, like the state's efforts with the Town of Babylon at Fire Island. Specifically, we request that the State participate in this project with the Town on a 50/50 matching basis, perhaps from funds available from the State Environmental Protection Fund or another state funding source. Authority for state participation exists under current state law pursuant to Articles 54 and 58 of the State Environmental Conservation Law.

Because of the immediate danger presented by this situation, we request the immediate attention of your administration to this matter. We are available to meet with members of your administration and the town to resolve this dangerous situation.

Thank you for your earliest consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Fred W. Thiele, Jr.  
State Assemblyman



Anthony H. Palumbo  
State Senator

cc: Basil Seggos, DEC Commissioner (w/enclosure)

Enclosure