

February 6, 2023

To the Shelter Island Town Board

I am enthusiastically writing this letter in support of Cornell Cooperative's Extension proposal to obtain CPF Water Quality Improvement money from the Shelter Island town for shellfish and habitat restoration here in the waters of Shelter Island.

As a high school teacher here on the island, I have seen the incredible potential of citizen science working with local environmental organizations to make a positive difference in our world. Through my Science club and my student DNA Barcode projects we have monitored native and invasive species and examined how organisms have reacted in response to climate change and urban sprawl. However, we have been limited in what we have been able to do in restoring our environment. This past Fall we were able to partner with Cornell Cooperative Extension in the restoration of oyster beds in Coecles harbor.

We obtained photographic evidence of the bottom of the harbor before the oysters were added and I look forward to seeing what students find when we go back this Spring. We hope to see positive changes.

I can not think of a more "win-win" type scenario than a project like this. The environment will benefit from the return of shellfish beds and students (Shelter Island residents) get experience in real world science and grow in becoming environmental stewards.

I wholeheartedly support CCE's objective of Shellfish and Habitat Restoration and my hope is that the town can support this project with CPF Water Quality Improvement money. Upon its approval I look forward to the exciting collaboration of local environmental experts, students, and our community to restore the health of our waters and create environmental stewards.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at (631)749-0302 (ext 146) or at dan.williams@shelterisland.k12.ny.us

Regards



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