

RESOLUTION

NUMBER 232-18

RE: (RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY HARBOR AND TRIBUTARIES FOCUS AREA FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR COASTAL STORM RISK MANAGEMENT WITHOUT SUFFICIENT STUDY OR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION)

WHEREAS, from July 9 through July 11, 2018, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (US ACOE) held public meetings for the first and only time regarding its “Coastal Storm Risk Management” study (CSRM) for New York Harbor and the Hudson Valley; and

WHEREAS, four of the ACOE’s proposed alternative plans (2, 3A, 3B and 4) involve outer and inner harbor barriers that may potentially block either the Hudson River or major New York Harbor tributaries during storm events altering river and tributary flow patterns; and

WHEREAS, two of the ACOE’s alternatives propose barriers (2 and 3A) would entirely close off the harbor and river from the Atlantic during storm events thereby altering river and tributary flow patterns, impeding the estuary’s tidal flow, contaminant and sediment transport, migration of fish, impede the tidal “respiration” of the river;

WHEREAS, over time, the barriers have the potential to significantly restrict migrations of striped bass, Atlantic sturgeon, herring, shad, eel and other species essential to the Hudson estuary, prevent the ocean tide from flushing NY Harbor, and inhibit rainstorm flood waters like those during Irene and Lee in 2011 from leaving the Hudson.; and

WHEREAS, open tidal exchange is essential to move sediment and flush contaminants and if tidal exchange is restricted, the harbor could require much more dredging to maintain shipping channels. Sewage and other contaminants could flush to the ocean more slowly, resulting in more pollution for our already contaminated harbor and river; and

WHEREAS, proposed alternative #5 – described as “Perimeter-only” and relying entirely on shoreline-based floodwalls and levees - is the only scenario presented so far that may protect low-lying communities from storm surge from storms like Irene, Lee and Sandy, while leaving our rivers to continue to flow naturally; and

WHEREAS, the proposed plans with in-water barriers do not account for climate change and do nothing to help communities adapt to sea level rise; and insufficient scientific data is available to fully understand the consequences of altering Hudson River flow with permanent barriers; and

WHEREAS, the public comment period has been set for only five weeks during peak summer vacation times when many residents are away and not easily informed about this major set of proposals; and

WHEREAS, Scenic Hudson, Riverkeeper, Historic Hudson River Towns and many others have voiced their concern and opposition to storm risk management approaches that could severely compromise the health of the Hudson River and its tributaries; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Cortlandt completed an award-winning Sustainable Master Plan in 2016 that repeatedly acknowledges the importance of the Hudson River to the Town of Cortlandt including economic viability, passive recreational uses, active boating uses, and view corridors enjoyed by thousands;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Cortlandt does hereby register its strong opposition to the proposed alternatives that may impact the tidal flow of the Hudson River.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Cortlandt hereby register its support for further studies to ensure that all proposed alternative measures are fully evaluated in accordance with National Environmental Protection Act, the Federal Coastal Zone Management, and include more shoreline-based measures such as Alternative 5, described as “Perimeter Only”, be evaluated

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Cortlandt hereby request that the public comment period be extended by 90 days to allow for full public understanding and response to the US ACOE proposals; and be it further

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be distributed to Nancy J. Brighton, Chief, Watershed Section, US ACOE, Senator Chuck Schumer, Congresswoman Nita Lowey, Governor Andrew Cuomo, and Secretary of State Rossana Rosado.

**BY ORDER OF THE TOWN BOARD
OF THE TOWN OF CORTLANDT
Laroue Rose Shatzkin
Town Clerk**

**Adopted on Sept. 17, 2018
at a Special Town Board Meeting
Held at the Town Hall**