

Sarah Anker

★ For Suffolk County Legislator ★

Priorities: Protecting Our Health and Environment

Since being elected in 2011, Legislator Anker has supported the preservation of thousands of acres of open space. She advocates for remediation of toxic sites, educational programs to encourage residents to “Go Green” by recycling, using fewer toxic chemicals, and the importance of being stewards of our environment. The following information provides an overview of Legislator Anker’s environmental initiatives and projects.

Protecting Our Water:

- **Reclaim Our Water Initiative:** Legislator Anker supports proactive water protection measures, such as the county’s “Reclaim Our Water” initiative, which is a series of infrastructure projects to improve public health and reduce toxins in the environment. The **Innovative Alternative Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Demonstration Project installs alternative septic systems on residential lots and monitors the system’s ability to reduce nitrogen output.** On Long Island, water is an economic driver that attracts tourism and serves as a source of income for many fishermen and farmers. Toxins from antiquated septic systems and illegal dumping contaminates our drinking water and coastal ecosystems.
- **Protecting the Long Island Sound:** Legislator Anker has advocated for decades to protect our drinking water and surface water. Water issues include: storm water runoff, erosion, dredge dumping, and keeping chemicals and pollutants out of our water. As a member of Suffolk County’s Environment, Planning and Agriculture Committee, New York State Senator Ken LaValle’s Environmental Roundtable, and Brookhaven National Laboratory’s Legislative Roundtable, she provides oversight and advocacy when addressing polluted sites.
- **Land Acquisition:** Legislator Anker has supported thousands of acres of open space land preservation in Suffolk County. By protecting our open space, we can better protect our ground water. Local preserved parcels include: 5.4 acres on Landing Road in Miller Place, 24 acres in Middle Island (Country View Estates), and 44.3 acres of the Mt. Sinai Little Portion Friary. Currently, she is pursuing a 17 acre parcel in Middle Island at the former Kmart site for active parkland.
- **Suffolk County Drinking Water Protection Program:** This program authorizes the acquisition of land by Suffolk County for environmental protection. Legislator Anker sponsored Resolution 1087-2014 authorizing the Director of the Division of Real Property Acquisition Management to appraise a parcel of land under the county’s new three-step land acquisition process to make acquiring open space more efficient and effective.
- **Stormwater Runoff Parking Lots Design:** Following a report by the Suffolk County Planning Commission entitled “Managing Stormwater – Natural Vegetation and Green Methodologies,” Legislator Anker co-sponsored Resolution 149-2012 requiring the Department of Public Works to consider the techniques to safely manage stormwater runoff when designing or repaving parking lots.

- **Protecting Our Health by Keeping Our Water Safe:** Reducing toxins in our environment that directly affect our health is one of Legislator Anker's top priorities to ensure the health of all residents in Suffolk County. Sponsored and cosponsored resolutions include:
 - *Micro-Bead Resolution:* This resolution bans the sale of personal care products containing micro-beads in Suffolk County. Micro-beads are found in body washes, facial scrubs, toothpastes and shampoos, and are made up of plastics and other similar compounds. Due to their small size they are not properly filtered out of the water system and can end up in waterways and drinking water. Microbeads can be toxic to the aquatic and marine ecosystems and may contaminate food.
 - *Prohibition of the Acceptance of Wastewater Produced by Hydraulic Fracturing:* This resolution prohibits county sewage treatment facilities from accepting wastewater produced by hydraulic fracturing. The wastewater from hydraulic fracturing can contain toxic byproducts, such as nitrogen, phosphorous, and carbon.

Preserving Our Farming Legacy:

- **Farmland Preservation:** As a member of the Environment, Planning, and Agriculture Committee, Legislator Anker continues to advocate for farmland preservation. In addition, she works with the local farming community to address their specific needs and concerns. This includes supporting the Suffolk County Farmland Committee and the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program (IR 1025-2017).
- **Educational Agriculture Support Initiative (EASI):** The EASI program, sponsored by Legislator Anker, provides resources and materials that are used to educate residents and children about beneficial environmental propagation, invasive plant species, and farmland sustainability. The EASI program partners with the Mount Sinai Heritage Trust, Long Island Native Plant Initiative, Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County to create a native plant garden at Heritage Park in Mount Sinai, which contains various native plant species to attract and sustain pollinators including bees and butterflies. By planting native plants Suffolk County can help sustain its farms and its beneficial insect population.

Protecting the Character of Our Communities:

- **Rails to Trails:** The 10-mile Rails to Trails Recreational Path runs from Mt. Sinai to Wading River along the LIPA right-of-way. The project was first introduced in 2001 with many stakeholders involved including: Suffolk County Legislative and Executive offices, federal and state government officials, Suffolk County Department of Public Works, New York State Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Long Island Power Authority. The project is being facilitated by Legislator Anker and continues to move forward. The trail will provide a safe outlet for walking, running, and biking, and will enhance the value of the communities and provide passive traffic for local businesses.
- **North Shore Coastal Erosion Task Force:** The North Shore Coastal Erosion Task Force, created and chaired by Legislator Anker, addressed the devastating erosion on Suffolk County's north shore. The task force, which consisted of county, state and federal representatives, Stony Brook University

researchers, and nonprofit organizations, developed strategies to best protect the infrastructure and environment, and provided educational material for residents in need of assistance with coastal erosion on their properties.

- **Authorization of Emergency Barrier Island Repair Agreements:** Following damages from Superstorm Sandy to Smith Point County Park, the Wilderness Area of the Fire Island National Seashore, and the Cupsogue County Park, Legislator Anker co-sponsored a resolution authorizing the county to enter into emergency repair agreements with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.
- **2035 Comprehensive Masterplan:** Legislator Anker supported the 2035 Comprehensive Masterplan, which consists of over 100 recommendations and suggestions for building a better Suffolk County over the next 20 years. Some topics touched upon in the document include: transportation, economic development, crime, housing, health, quality of life, education, tourism, and water quality. There are two main goals of this plan: 1) create a sustainable Suffolk County, and 2) create sustainable economic development for the region.
- **Climate Action Plan:** Legislator Anker sponsored legislation accepting the Suffolk County Climate Action Plan, Resolution 554-2015. The plan was proposed by the Climate Smart Community Standing Committee, which examined climate change issues and how to remedy them. The Climate Action Plan serves as a source for the county's climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- **Parks in Our Community:** Legislator Anker is working to create a community park at the blighted former Kmart property in Middle Island. Having worked with the Mt. Sinai community to create Mt. Sinai's Heritage Park, Legislator Anker is using that process as a template to provide the Longwood community a much-needed park. This will be done in partnership with the town and the Longwood Youth Association, which has over 3,000 members. In addition, she cosponsored legislation to prevent illegal dumping and vandalism in our county parks.
- **Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) Legislative Advisory Board Member:** Prior to being a member of the Legislative Board at BNL, Legislator Anker was a member of BNL's Community Advisory Committee. Legislator Anker supports protecting and remediating the environment, promoting science and technology growth, and protecting BNL jobs to maintain economic sustainability.

Recycling:

- **Single Stream Recycling Program:** Legislator Anker sponsored legislation to partner with the Town of Brookhaven to establish a Single Stream Recycling Pilot Program at the Yaphank County Center.
- **Go Green Initiative for County Communications:** Legislator Anker cosponsored a resolution to reduce paper consumption in the county that mandates most communications be sent electronically.