

THE KEYSpan PROPERTY A BRIEF HISTORY

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Introduction

The KeySpan property covers approximately 520 acres in the northeast corner of Riverhead Town and a small portion of adjacent Southold Town. It includes about 300 acres of farmland, most of it currently or recently in cultivation. It also includes over 5,000 feet of shoreline on Long Island Sound, backed by high bluffs of sand and clay. Behind the bluffs are about 200 acres of woodland, mostly old fields and second-growth forest. Some of this area is highly disturbed by recent activities, but it also includes the pristine Hallock Pond, one other smaller pond to the east, a former cranberry bog, several seasonal wetlands and large areas of wooded and semi-wooded wildlife habitat.

Although the current KeySpan property in Riverhead was first assembled in the 1960s for industrial purposes, it has a history that goes back much further. The story includes Native Americans, Puritans and Polish immigrants. It includes the men and women who tilled the soil, fished off its shores and lived off its bounty – and those who attempted to develop it. Everyone who touched this land had a vision for the future – whether it was of providing rich farms for their descendants or inexpensive power for the region. And everyone who touched this land has left behind visible evidence of their presence, ranging from prehistoric artifacts and historic farm buildings to the detritus of modern industrial operations. What follows is their story.

Before the First Inhabitants

The land itself was largely shaped during the Wisconsin glacial period. When the glaciers that once covered northern North America finally receded about 15,000 years ago, they left behind massive terminal moraines. The high bluffs along the Sound, peaking at 112 feet, are composed of huge boulders and other material bulldozed by the glacier from Connecticut and Massachusetts. The layers of sand and clay underlying the prime agricultural soils that slope off southward towards Great Peconic Bay were all deposited by water melting from the great glacier.

The First Inhabitants

Long before the Hallocks or any other descendents of early European settlers came into the region, Native Americans occupied what is now the KeySpan property. About 1975 the Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO) commissioned anthropologists John F. Vetter and Bert Salwen to undertake an "Archaeological Reconnaissance" as part of the environmental impact study in preparation for building the two nuclear power plants planned for the site. Vetter and Salwen conducted subsurface tests in an area on the southwest side of Hallock Pond and found a variety of "aboriginal artifacts" including knives, scrapers, projectile points, hammerstones and grinding stones. Based on their limited excavations, the archaeologists determined that the site "represents a series of Late Archaic and Transitional occupations dating back to at least 1500 B.C." They concluded that the site near the pond was "a rich archaeological resource" and that its preservation was "extremely important." They even recommended nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Vetter and Salwen also identified another site, covering about 15 acres running along the eastern boundary of the property halfway between Sound Avenue and the shoreline of Long Island Sound. On or near the surface they found numerous artifacts "suggesting one or more Late Archaic occupations." Irving Downs, who farmed near that area until the 1960s, had an extensive collection of arrowheads and other aboriginal artifacts he picked up there, again confirming the intensity of Native American occupation. In their report, Vetter and Salwen also recommend that this part of the property not be disturbed.

The 17th Century: Early Owners

The entire KeySpan property was part of the Town of Southold, which stretched all the way west to Wading River, until Riverhead was finally set off as a separate town in 1792. Originally, the area was common land belonging to all of the citizens of Southold, who were mostly part of the large-scale 1630s Puritan exodus from England. In 1661, however, the freeholders met in a town meeting and decided to divide the area called "Aquebogue" into forty lots running from "sea to sea" – i.e., from Long Island Sound on the north to Great Peconic Bay on the south. This "First Aquebogue Division" covered the area starting at the "Canoe Place" at the head of Mattituck Inlet and running west almost to Union Avenue. The KeySpan property includes parts of nine allotments, each of which was 40 rods (660 feet) wide.

The borders dividing the allotments were known as "eleven o'clock lines" because of the direction of the sun's shadows at that time of the day. These 17th century lines, intended to be roughly perpendicular with the shores of Long Island Sound and Great Peconic Bay, still determine the east and west boundaries of the KeySpan property. Most of the numerous old boundaries, farm roads and hedgerows on the property today also still follow these "eleven o'clock" lines and are visible legacies of that first survey done back in 1661.

William Hallock received two allotments just to the east of the current Riverhead-Southold border. Running west from there across the KeySpan parcel, lots were granted to Edward Petty, John Swezey, Barnabas Wines, Barnabas Horton and the "Widow" (Margaret) Cooper. Grants were distributed according to wealth, with the richer inhabitants getting more lots. Except for Barnabas Wines, who received only one and John Swezey who received four, each of these individuals received two lots apiece. All of these men and women were from the "first families" of Southold and most have streets named for them somewhere on the North Fork.

First Settlers

None of the original owners ever lived on their Aquebogue allotments. Generally, it was not until the second or third generation that their descendents spread as far west as the Aquebogue lands. Most likely, Richard Howell (1654-1709) was the earliest person to settle on the KeySpan property -- and one of the first in the entire Aquebogue Division. In 1675, his father-in-law, William Hallock, also his stepfather, gave him a 20-rod wide strip on the far west edge of his two allotments, running from Sound to Bay. The north end of this strip is now the eastern-most part of the KeySpan holding (see Figure 1). The gift deed stipulated that "Richard Howell shall not lett or farme said land to any person or persons but to such as shall be approved by the neighborhood to be honest, peaceable and quiet."

A surviving payment record indicates that Richard Howell built a house on that property in 1678. According to the story passed down in the Howell family, when the property was subsequently surveyed, after the east line was run "south of the swamp," the surveyor discovered that the house was straddling the line. Consequently, it was necessary for Howell to buy a 4-rod-wide jog to the east that can still be seen on survey maps of the KeySpan property. Howell's house must have stood near the east line of the KeySpan property, south of the jog in the property line and south of the wetlands that still exist in the area (house # 2 in Figure 1). The first house was some 2,000 feet north of the early-19th century Howell house still standing on Sound Avenue (house # 14 in Figure 1). Indeed, the latter house may incorporate portions of the original house. The Howell family gradually acquired more land to the west and continued to live on the farm, now part of the KeySpan property, for more than 250 years until the last family member living there died in 1951.

Although Sound Avenue, then known as the "Road to Setauket" was already in use, like most late-17th and early-18th century houses in the area, Howell's house was located in a spot convenient to water, rather than along the road. A few years earlier, Howell's father-in-law, William Hallock, who probably was the first settler in the Aquebogue Division, had built his own house well back from Sound Avenue. The Hallock house was only a few hundred yards east of Howell's

house and probably convinced Howell to settle on that part of his almost-four-mile long strip of land. The site of the Hallock house is still occupied by a mid-19th century house built by a direct descendant.

One of John Swezey's grandsons, Richard Swezey (1690-1782), was likely the second Southholder to settle on the KeySpan property. He inherited the northern half of his grandfather's original Aquebogue allotments. In 1718, shortly after Richard's marriage to Elizabeth Parshall, he received a quitclaim deed to the property from his brother. The young couple likely built a house on the property about that time. The 1776 and 1778 censuses list him between Samuel Hudson, who lived just west of the KeySpan property, and Jonathan Howell, a grandson of Richard Howell, on the east.

Capt. Zachariah Hallock (1760-1820) bought his first farm, including a small house, from two of Richard Swezey's daughters in 1780. So, it is quite likely to have been the old Swezey house into which Zachariah moved his own young family. According to family recollection, this home was near a pond that has since disappeared, in a low spot still visible on the topographical map about 2,000 feet north of Sound Avenue on the east line of the farm just east of the current Hallockville Museum (house # 1 in Figure 1).

Reuben Brown (c. 1734-1794) and his bride, Elinor Youngs, were probably the third family to settle on the KeySpan property. About the time of their 1765 marriage they built the earliest portion of what is now known as the Hallock homestead (house # 8 in Figure 1). Brown sold his house and farm to the Hallock family sometime in the late 1790s. The house was then just a simple story-and-a-half structure that is almost totally hidden by latter construction.

In addition to the Howells, Swezeys and Browns, there was at least one other family living on the current KeySpan property by end of the Revolution. David Tuthill had a house that stood on Sound Avenue between the first and second houses to the east of the Museum complex (house # 10 in Figure 1). Like the Swezeys to the north and the Browns to his west, he also sold out to Capt. Zachariah Hallock sometime in the 1780s. Capt. Zachariah occupied it until his death, when an inventory indicates it was a 7-room story-and-a-half structure. Members of the Hallock family occupied the house through the 19th century.

Not much is known about David Tuthill. Military records indicate that a 19-year-old David Tuthill served in a local regiment of Minutemen in 1776. Later in the war he was a crewmember on a privateer, *The Confederacy*, operated out of Connecticut. The house may have been relatively new when Zachariah Hallock bought it, since Tuthill was not listed in either the 1776 or the 1778 census of the area. If the military records are correct about Tuthill's age, it seems most likely that he built the house after the Revolution, when he would have been in his mid-20s.

The Revolution

At the time of the Revolution, Richard Howell's grandson, Jonathan Howell, was living in the family house on the property. Frederic Gregory Mather writes in his *Refugees of 1776 from Long Island to Connecticut* that Howell was a member of a regiment of Minutemen commanded by Col. Josiah Smith, although there is some confusion because at least two other Jonathan Howells lived in the county at the time.

Howell was treated harshly by the British and their loyalist sympathizers. According to a journal kept by Orient native Augustus Griffin, in retaliation for some patriotic comments, Howell was tied to a tree and given three or four hundred lashes on his bare back – from which he barely survived. Along with many other Long Island supporters of the cause, Howell was forced to evacuate to Connecticut for the duration of the war. Like refugees in all wars, these “Refugees of 1776” suffered great hardships during their exile. Details of his exile are scarce, except that in 1777 Howell petitioned Connecticut authorities for permission to go over to Long Island, then behind enemy lines, to retrieve some flax and wool from his farm.

During the Revolution, Rueben Brown, like his neighbor Jonathan Howell, was a patriot. The area appears to have been something of a hotbed of revolutionary sentiment. Both of them, along with Zachariah Hallock (then living a little to the east) appear to have served together in a local regiment of Minute Men in 1776. Brown, like Howell, was forced to evacuate to Connecticut for the duration of the war. Surviving records show payments he made for the transportation of household goods and foodstuffs from Long Island to Connecticut in 1776 and 1777. Economic difficulties caused by the war and hard times afterwards may ultimately have led Reuben Brown to sell his homestead and farm to the Hallocks in the 1790s.

No military actions appear to have occurred in the area before or during the British occupation of Long Island, which lasted for the duration of the war. However, many years later, Howell family descendants found a Hessian sword blade near a spring in the northeast corner of what is now the KeySpan property.

War of 1812

The only military action ever to occur on or near the KeySpan property took place in 1814, near the end of the War of 1812. The battle, actually more of a skirmish, started when local farmers were fishing with a seine net off of Luce's Landing, now the Pier Avenue public beach, early on a foggy June morning. When the fog lifted, they were surprised to spot a small American ship, which was in turn surprised to find itself dangerously close to a much-larger British frigate. The American ship turned out to be the cutter Nathan Hale, manned by a crew of

Yale students. Finding themselves much out-gunned – they only had one small cannon – the Yale students rowed their ship to shore to escape the threat.

The farmers tried to help the Yale students tow their ship east to Mattituck Inlet, the nearest safe harbor, but only succeeded in reaching a gully near the west edge of the KeySpan property before they were overtaken by the British ship. They beached the boat in the gully, carried the cannon to a high point on top of the cliffs at the west boundary of the KeySpan property and sent out an alarm to other local farmers. Hallock family legend records that 10-year old Herman, a son of Zachariah II and grandson of Capt. Zachariah, was one of three riders sent Paul Revere-style on horseback to warn the neighboring farmers of the enemy vessel in the Sound.

Local farmers rallied to their cliff-top redoubt. There, they and the Yalies held their own against the man-of-war for three days with only the small cannon, muskets and rapidly diminishing ammunition. At one point, the farmers, many of whom were excellent marksmen because of their hunting experience, repulsed a British landing party, allegedly inflicting severe casualties on the invaders. On the second morning, another British man-of-war appeared, eventually taking up a station near the shore directly north of the Hallock homestead in an attempt to rake the American positions from the side. A cannon ball from the first ship, stationed directly off shore, shot straight down the fence running along the west boundary of the KeySpan property, destroying a long section and setting loose the farmers' horses tied to it. Despite a heavy bombardment, none of the defenders were killed – perhaps because their lookouts watched diligently for the flash of cannon on the British ships, giving the defenders time to duck for cover before the balls arrived.

On the third day, as American ammunition ran out, the British succeeded in capturing the cutter and towing it away. As Miss Bessie Hallock recorded in her "Autobiography of an Old House" written a century later, "Although a losing battle, it was fought valiantly for three days." The only physical evidence of this engagement are a few cannonballs, one of which is now displayed in the Hallockville Museum's Hudson house, that were later found on the KeySpan property.

Hallockville: A Five-generation Story

Five old farmhouses stand on the Sound Avenue frontage of the KeySpan property, flanking both east and west the historic house and barns owned by the Hallockville Museum. Along with the homestead, the museum's "catalogue house" and its staff house and three more structures nearby, the eleven houses are referred to as "Hallockville" because all of them (or their predecessors) were built or inhabited by members of the Hallock family in the 19th century. Together these houses tell a remarkable two-century-long story about how family patriarchs looked out for their children by providing them with homes and farms –

generally at the time of their marriage -- and at the same time kept their offspring nearby and under parental control. It started with Capt. Zachariah Hallock, the father, grandfather or great-grandfather of the builders of all the Hallockville homes.

Capt. Zachariah Hallock was the first member of the family to live in the area now owned by KeySpan when he moved into the old Swezey house about 1780 (house #1 in Figure 1). His family was then living just east of the Howells, beyond the eastern end of the KeySpan property. He served with Reuben Brown in the Minutemen, but had not joined the "Refugees of 1776" in Connecticut. Perhaps his patriotism was not quite as fervent as Brown's.

The 150 acres that Capt. Zachariah acquired from the Swezeys in 1780 ran across the northern half of the Hallock farm behind the museum and the farms to the east and west (see Figure 1). The old Swezey house was on the southern edge of that property. A few years later, Zachariah acquired a larger home from David Tuthill on Sound Avenue just to the east of Reuben Brown's house (the current museum) and moved there (house # 10 in Figure 1). By the time of his death in 1820, Capt. Zachariah acquired all of the western two-thirds of the KeySpan property except for the western-most farm, as well as extensive property south of the road and elsewhere (see Hallock holdings in Figure 1).

In 1801 Capt. Zachariah acquired the old Brown homestead from his brother, who had bought it from the Browns a few years earlier, and settled his son Zachariah II there with his new bride (house # 8 in Figure 1). He settled the second son, John, around the time of the latter's marriage in 1806, in a new house west of Zachariah II (house # 5 in Figure 1). This house stood between houses later built for John's own sons, but has since disappeared. When his third son, Bethuel, married in 1813, Capt. Zachariah also settled him in a new house, part of which is incorporated into the 1840s house still standing just to the east of the museum (house # 9 in Figure 1) .

In turn, each of the three children managed to provide farms for all their sons, generally about the times of their marriages. Between them, they provided ten homes. Bethuel (1790-1866) had four sons. He acquired additional property and built the small house (just over 500 square feet) still standing on KeySpan property just east of his own for his third son, Joseph Edwin, who in 1835 was the first to marry (house # 11 in Figure 1). For the next to marry in 1837 , Bethuel E., he built an equally small house across the street that was moved in the 1980s behind the museum barn to be the staff cottage (house # 17 in Figure 1). Bethuel (the father) remarried in 1837 and soon moved to his new wife's farm a mile further east near Bergen Avenue in what was referred to then as "West Mattituck." When he moved to Mattituck, he sold his house to a nephew, John Franklin Hallock. At the same time, he sold to his son Joseph Edwin the adjacent farm, apparently containing the house he had recently built for him on that property.

John also had four sons. Three had houses surrounding their father's house. Two of these, the 1850 Caleb Hallock house and the 1841 Daniel Wells Hallock house, still stand on KeySpan property to the west of the museum (houses # 4 and 6 in Figure 1). The "Sears Catalogue House" is a 1930s replacement for the third house, which was built about 1832 for son Isaiah and burned in 1915 (house # 7 in Figure 1). John's fourth son, John Franklin, ultimately moved to his Uncle Bethuel's old house, just east of the museum on KeySpan property (house # 9 in Figure 1), when the latter moved to West Mattituck. The entire story-and-a-half front part of that house was most likely built after John Franklin moved there, burying Bethuel's original house in the back right corner.

Zachariah II did equally well by his two sons. In 1827 he bought a 130-acre farm about a mile to the west. At first, he settled his oldest son Herman, who was newly married, on that farm in a house that stood until recently on the corner of Pier Avenue and Sound Avenue. Parts of that house are incorporated into the author's own house. The other son, Zachariah III, remained on the home farm. In 1845, the two brothers exchanged houses for reasons no one has been able to discern. Herman came back to live in the old homestead and Zachariah III moved to the west house. Both brothers soon vastly expanded and modernized their houses, raising the roofs and changing the profiles considerably.

The process continued into the fourth generation, although on a more limited basis. In 1859 Joseph Edwin's son, Eugene, built a large house just to the east of his father's (house # 12 in Figure 1). This is now the eastern-most house still standing on the KeySpan property. Herman's son, David Halsey, took over the old homestead, but the other two brothers left the area. John Franklin's only surviving son, also named John, moved into the old Tuthill house (house # 10) that his great-grandfather Capt. Zachariah Hallock had occupied from the 1780's until his death in 1820. A mile to the west, Herman's brother Zachariah left his house to his son Henry Lewis. Another son, George Wilson, ended up with a new house across the street from his father and a daughter, Matilda Keziah, married Sheldon R. Downs, who built a new house on his family's property within sight of both of their parent's houses.

Perhaps the best-documented example of a father providing a home for his fourth-generation son occurred in 1878. That year the local paper reported that John's son Isaiah was "building a dwelling house for his son [Lemuel Beecher] Hallock located on Herrick Road." That house, which was within sight of Isaiah's own house, is also still standing, having recently been converted into the Red Barn B&B (house # 15 in Figure 1). Like most of the Hallocks of his generation, L. Beecher Hallock eventually gave up farming. By the time the *Hallock Genealogy* was published in 1926, he was listed as "a general helper and handy man."

Isaiah Hallock also apparently provided homes for his other two sons. The oldest surviving son, George C. Hallock (1842-1927), received a farm about 1,000 feet to the west of his father's house on land that now constitutes the farthest west portion of the KeySpan property (house # 3 in Figure 1). George C. probably lived in a house built about 1800 by Jonathan Howell (1771 – 1832), son of the Revolutionary War era Jonathan who lived on the east side of the Hallocks. Mrs. John Kujawski now lives on the site. Isaiah's youngest son, William Fillmore Hallock, received his father's old place (house # 7), the predecessor of the "catalogue house" now owned by the museum.

In some cases, the pattern continued into the fifth generation, most notably in the old homestead where the last Hallock lived until 1979. Similarly, just to the east John Hallock's son, John Morse Hallock succeeded his grandfather in the old Bethuel Hallock house (house # 9) about 1886. John Morse became locally famous for raising fine racing horses. However, that business may have led to his financial ruin, as he sold the farm in 1907 and moved to New Jersey where he became a "factory operative," in the words of the *Hallock Genealogy*.

The story was quite different for daughters. Although Capt. Zachariah had seven daughters, none received land from their father. The custom of buying or providing a farm for your son did not carry through to providing a farm for your daughter and son-in-law. For instance, one of Capt. Zachariah's daughters, Elizabeth, married Jonathan Howell, of the Howell family just to the east. Jonathan and Elizabeth ended up living just west of her father's land on the western-most farm that now makes up the KeySpan property, as mentioned above (house # 3 in Figure1). However, Howell bought the property himself rather than receiving it as a gift from his father-in-law. Two more of Capt. Zachariah's daughters also married local farmers, but again did not receive farms from their father. The other four daughters moved to either New York City or Brooklyn (two with their husbands and two with their married sisters). Similar fates apparently befell the daughters in the next generation.

This pattern of not providing farms for daughters and sons-in-law was still holding strong two generations later. Caleb Hallock, one of John's sons, had only one child, a daughter Adeline who married Joseph Woodhull in 1862. In 1866, Woodhull bought the farm adjacent to this father-in-law from the latter's brother, Daniel Wells Hallock (# 6 in Figure 1), who in turn moved to a farm in Aquebogue. Joseph and Adeline never received any property from her father, although Woodhull worked his farm together with his father-in-law next door. After Woodhull's untimely death in 1872, both farms soon passed out of the family.

Similarly, David Halsey Hallock sold property to his daughter, Eula, and son-in-law Charles Wells rather than giving it to them, as had been the custom for so many Hallock sons. In 1903 David Halsey Hallock detached the no-longer-needed 1860 wing from the west side of the homestead and moved it across the

street to the farm he owned on the south side of Sound Avenue, where it formed the core of a new house (# 16 in Figure 1). In 1907 he sold that property to his daughter, Eula, and son-in-law, Charles Wells. They had married in 1891 and lived on West Lane and further west on Sound Avenue before purchasing this farm. Presumably there was a barn on the property or David Halsey Hallock had one built. Charles Wells built a second barn on the property in 1907. Charles and Eula lived here until about 1917 when they sold the farm. The house burned to the ground in 1938, when it belonged to the Zimnoski family. Two barns survive from Charles and Eula's farm and are being restored by Martha Clara Vineyards.

At one time or another, at least fourteen Hallock houses stood in the area called "Hallockville." Of these, six are still standing -- the museum homestead (house # 8), the Eugene Hallock house still more-or-less standing on KeySpan property (#4), the Bethuel "Jr." house (# 17) now located behind the homestead barn, the Daniel Wells Hallock house (#11) which is slated to become the headquarters of the Long Island Antique Power Association, the Red Barn B&B on Herrick's Lane (#15) and the John Hallock house that is now part of Jen's nursery in Mattituck. Some of the others are long gone. The Isaiah/William Fillmore house (#7) burned down in 1915 and was eventually replaced by the Cichanowicz house the Charles and Eula [Hallock] Wells house (# 16) that once stood across the street on property now owned by Martha Clara Vineyards and burned down in 1938, the George C. Hallock house (# 3) near the southeast corner of the Keyspan property was replaced by current Kujawski house in the early 20th century. Three more houses were demolished in 2002 by KeySpan (#s,6,9, and 12) as they had deriorated to sach a point that they were safety hazards.

This still leaves three more early Hallock houses unaccounted for – Capt. Zachariah's original house he acquired in 1780 by the pond northeast of the museum (#1), the former Tuthill house on Sound Avenue that he moved down to latter in the 1780s (# 10) and the house built for his son John about 1806 (#5).

At one point in his research, the author thought he had located Capt. Zachariah's second house (# 10 in Figure 1). According to a newspaper clipping from 1907, "The remaining portion of John Hallock's house has been purchased by John G. Reeve and moved to a site east of Mr. Reeve's [who lived in what is now the west house at Jen's Nursery in Mattituck]" where it was to be "put in order." Four generations of Hallocks in a row were all named "John" – causing considerable confusion. However, the "John" referred to in the article is most likely the one who lived just east of the Bethuel Hallock house and was married to "Aunt" Francis Hallock whose cute Victorian washhouse still survives on KeySpan property and hopefully will someday be moved to the Museum.

Since John lived in Capt. Zachariah's old house, it seemed possible that structure had been the one moved a mile or so east in 1907. However, examination of the building (now the much-altered core of the eastern-most of

the two old houses currently occupied by Jen's Nursery) indicates that it was built in the middle decades of the 19th century. Most likely it was an addition to (or possibly replacement for) Capt. Zachariah's old house that John built sometime after his marriage in 1854. Probably this then-relatively-new structure was the only part of John's house thought worth saving in 1907.

At their peak in the third quarter of the 19th century, the Hallocks occupied nine or ten houses along the Sound Avenue frontage of the KeySpan property. In 1814, according to a tally prepared by Miss. Ella Hallock, there were four Hallocks living there, with Howell relatives on each side. An 1858 map shows eight Hallocks in a row in the area. An 1873 map shows eleven houses along the frontage of the Riverhead part of the KeySpan property. Of these, six were labeled as Hallock houses, two are unlabeled, but were likely occupied by Hallocks and a Hallock son-in-law occupied another. By 1896, as family members gradually died off or moved away, the number was down to six Hallock houses. By 1909, there were only three, two of which belonged to Hallock widows. By the time David Halsey Hallock died in 1939 at 101, the only Hallocks left were his three unmarried children living in the old homestead.

Even more remarkable, all of the KeySpan property belonged to the Hallocks and their descendants at one time or another. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Capt. Zachariah owned all of the KeySpan property except for the two farms furthest east containing just over 90 acres. As recounted above, about 30 acres of that was part of the original Hallock Aquebogue allotment. The rest, although never owned by a Hallock, was owed by the Howells, who were of course Hallock family descendants.

Historic Period Archaeological Sites

Clearly, the house sites on the KeySpan property harbor a lot of interesting archaeological evidence about the early history of the area. The Vetter and Salwen "Archaeological Reconnaissance" commissioned by LILCO included four test excavations around the 1813 Bethuel Hallock house (# 9 in Figure 1). The archaeologists were excited to find "relatively undisturbed stratigraphy" with ceramics specimens they could easily date from about 1760 to 1840. Although they did not do any excavations around the other historic houses on the property, they concluded "the visibly undisturbed condition of the area and the known and documented antiquity of the existing historic structures insures the presence of important subsurface archaeological materials throughout the Historic District [i.e., around the farmsteads along Sound Avenue]."

Vetter and Salwen were apparently unaware that there are four additional house sites with potential 17th, 18th century and early-19th century archaeological material. Indeed, the discovery of these other four house sites was the biggest surprise for the author as he commenced research on the project. The oldest of

these was the location of the 1678 Richard Howell house on the far eastern boundary of the KeySpan property (# 2 in Figure 1) -- in an area that also apparently contains pre-historic artifacts.

Next oldest was the c. 1718 Richard Swezey home that Capt. Zachariah Hallock likely occupied briefly in the early 1780s (# 1 in Figure 1) in the middle of the fields to the northeast of the museum. The third-oldest was the Tuthill house that Capt. Zachariah moved to later in the 1780s and occupied until his death in 1820 (house # 10). This stood between the second and third houses to the east of the museum. And finally, a house built about 1806 by John Hallock, one of Capt. Zachariah Hallock's sons, once stood between the current Caleb Hallock and Daniel Wells Hallock houses to the west of the Museum property (house # 5). That area also appears to be relatively undisturbed and could be a good archaeological site.

The Vetter and Salwen archaeological survey concluded, "it is extremely important that no activities be permitted within this sensitive zone [around the houses] that would disturb or destroy the value of the LILCO portion of the [Sound Avenue] Historic District as an archaeological site." Interestingly, the two anthropologists did not feel strongly about the preservation of the houses themselves.

Hallock's Pond

Hallock's Pond, which sits 71 feet above sea level, and the smaller Lilly Pond to the east are both what are know as "perched ponds." They are not spring fed. Instead, they sit on a thick layer of impervious clay deposited by the Wisconsin glacier. The clay prevents rainwater from percolating down to the water table far below, thus creating the pond. Such "perched ponds" are relatively common on Long Island, with others existing to the east in Mattituck and elsewhere.

The pond was an important part of the Hallock family farm. They always referred to it as the "farm pond." It was part of Capt. Zachariah Hallock's first purchase in 1780, although his house was by another pond further east and south that has since disappeared. He undoubtedly used both ponds for watering livestock and similar purposes. When he died in 1820, he was very careful in his will to run the dividing line between property left to his sons Zachariah and John through this pond so that both could have access to it. In 1838, John Hallock in turn sold a 3-rod wide strip across the top of his property to a neighbor to the west so that he could also have access to the pond for watering cattle. Although the third son, Bethuel, did not get access to Hallock's Pond, his portion of his father's estate included two other ponds – Lilly Pond up in the hills and the now-mostly-disappeared pond further south where his father, Capt. Zachariah, first lived.

In 1851 the Hallocks laid a lead pipeline from their pond down to the homestead – providing running water for both house and barn. The Hallocks were particularly happy to have plentiful soft water available for washing, since well water was quite hard, in addition to being a long way down. The house sits about 10 feet lower than the pond. The slope of the land made the pipeline feasible without any pumping. According to family account books, the project cost \$503.12, a large sum in those days. Unfortunately, the pipe was too small and quickly became clogged. The Hallocks dug it up and sold it for the lead during the Civil War.

The Hallocks used the pond as a source of ice in the second half of the nineteenth century. Family records indicate that they had an icehouse on the pond in 1861. Later, they brought ice down to an icehouse behind the barn, where it was stored under straw for use in warm weather. The pond was not a direct source of food for the family, although it apparently contained goldfish and eels. However, the Hallocks used the boggy areas just to the east of the pond to grow cranberries well into the 20th century.

The pond also played a role in family recreation. Early 20th century photographs show it in a beautiful sylvan setting of summer picnics and strolls. In the winter, it must have been a great place for ice-skating. It was also apparently the source of some tragedy. According to a 1980 interview with Ella Hallock, at least three boys drowned there.

Water sources were also an important part of the landscape for the Howell family on the eastern portion of the KeySpan property. As indicated above, Richard Howells' first house was near a low spot where water still stands seasonally and where the water table is presumably near the surface. According to the story told the author by Alice Downs, a descendant of the Howells and one of the landowners who sold out to Levon Properties in the 1960s, there is a spring on the north part of the Howell property, more or less in the middle of the wooded area. When the property was divided between family members in the mid-19th century, the north part of the dividing line was curved eastward to provide both sides with access to that spring for watering their livestock. Later, when the spring became less important, Chauncey P. Howell (1845-1920) paid his cousin next door on the west \$100 to straighten the line.

The Sound Shore

Family records also show that the Hallocks made significant use of the Sound beach. The lane running towards the Sound between the museum property and the Bethuel Hallock house is mentioned in deeds and wills as early as 1820. It provided important access to the Sound shore. The rocky, exposed shoreline was not suitable for shipping agricultural produce. However, the Hallocks, like many of their neighbors, probably shipped cordwood to the New York market in

the early 19th century from a landing near the east side of the KeySpan property that was accessible down a gully by wagon.

The Hallocks took full advantage of the Sound's maritime bounty. As the account of the 1814 battle demonstrates, they were active fishermen. David Halsey Hallock's diary for 1855 contains accounts for the fishing company that engaged in large-scale fishing from the Sound shore. The catch was mostly used for fertilizer, playing a key role in restoring the fertility of easily depleted Long Island soils. Choice fish undoubtedly made it to the family tables where they constituted an important portion of the diet. An 1873 newspaper account mentions that Isaiah Hallock had recently caught "100,000 bunkers in a small net at the Sound" while his cousin next door, David Halsey Hallock, caught 52 "fine Spanish mackerel" in his net.

Polish Immigrant Farmers Achieve Success

The biggest story of the first half of the 20th century was the influx of Polish immigrants who began arriving in the area around the turn of the century. Often they worked first as farm laborers, saving up enough money to eventually buy farms of their own. By the middle of the 20th century, most of the land now owned by KeySpan was farmed by families of Polish descent. Typical of these Polish farmers was Conrad [Kostanty] Cichanowicz. He came to America as a young man in 1902. He was employed for a few years on a local farm, and then moved to Glen Cove where he was an estate manager. Along the way, he met and married Adele, who was also born in Poland. In 1923 they bought the farm just west of the museum complex. About 1931 or 2, apparently as their fortunes improved, the Cichanowicz built the house that that now is part of the museum complex (on the site of house #7 in Figure 1 that had burned down in 1915). Conrad farmed the property successfully until his death in 1944. His children and grandchildren continued to farm that property and land across the street and eventually leased most of the eastern portion of the KeySpan property.

One by one, all of the old Hallock farms were either acquired or taken over by Kujawskis, Trubisztes, Celics, Naugles, Cichanowicztes and Romanowskis. These families all worked hard and became successful farmers. Like the Hallocks before them, in most cases they passed their farms for two or three subsequent generations. In the end, their run on the property may be as long as was the Hallocks'. Members of the Kujawski family still farm the western half of the KeySpan-owned agricultural area while a Cichanowicz still grows herbs in a small area on the eastern portion of the property.

In a minor diversion from their farming, some of the families living on the KeySpan property during prohibition engaged in a little rum running operation. They even constructed a primitive inclined railway that made it easier to haul cases of bootleg liquor up the steep cliffs, where it was loaded into fast cars for

delivery to a thirsty New York City market. An accident with a cable that operated the lifting mechanism resulted in the death of one of the farmers. Also, according to family lore, when the Naugles barn burned down in 1936 at the height of the depression, it was profits from the rum-running operation that allowed them to build the handsome new barn recently moved to the museum property.

The Farmscape

The heart of the KeySpan property is the 320-plus acres of farmland. Most of it is prime, relatively level and highly productive soil, although the quality of the land lessens towards the terminal moraine along the Sound shore. It was this productive land that first brought the Howells, Swezeys, Browns, Tuthills and Hallocks to the property in the late-17th and 18th centuries. In the 20th century, the same productivity brought the Kujawskis, Trubiszses, Celics, Naugels and Cichanowiczses.

The KeySpan holding was divided into nine family farms for much of the latter 19th and early 20th centuries (see old farm boundaries indicated on Figure 1), with each farm averaging a little under 55 acres. Six of the hedgerows that once divided farm from farm still survive on the eastern half of the property. Each follows the historic pattern of “eleven o’clock” lines first established in the 17th century. The west boundary of the property follows and one of the internal hedgerows were surveyed in 1661. The east boundary follows a line laid out in the late 17th century. Most of the rest of the hedgerows that still form some of the most prominent features of the KeySpan property landscape are on lines laid out in the 18th early-19th centuries as the farmland boundaries were reconfigured by successive generations of Hallocks and Howells. The hedgerows on each side of the farm behind the Hallockville Museum are probably among the newest, but still close to two centuries old. They were delineated by Captain Zachariah Hallock’s will in 1820 to divide his property among his three sons. Several additional hedgerows probably once divided the western portion of the property, but have been removed to facilitate 20th century agricultural operations.

In the 19th century, these farms were all divided into fields of five-to-ten acres, each surrounded by split rail fences or a system of ditches and mounds surmounted by loped trees. At least half the acreage of each farm was devoted to hay and grazing, with numerous sheep and cattle left to pasture themselves. The rest of the land would have been devoted to corn, oats, buckwheat and similar crops. Most of the harvest was fed either to cattle or horses. Potatoes were a relatively small part of the picture, occupying only a few acres on each farm. Most farms had extensive orchards for cider production and home consumption.

The Hallocks and their neighbors were highly successful in the late 19th century. Each farm gradually sprouted an impressive collection of barns and other farm

buildings, as can still be seen at the Museum Farm. The Hallocks were also leaders in the introduction of modern agricultural techniques, founders of the local agricultural society and staunch believers in “progress.”

The landscape changed considerably in the 20th century. Potatoes became the dominant crop, almost a monoculture on most farms. The advent of tractors and mechanized equipment eliminated the need for the extensive pastures and hayfields necessary to feed horses. Mechanized agriculture also encouraged removal of fence lines to create larger fields more suitable for modern equipment. Mechanization also encouraged farmers to plant in long rows running north and south instead of the short east-and-west rows that show up in a rare mid-1920s aerial photograph of the area.

Woodlands

There were far fewer trees on the landscape in the 19th century. The property had been entirely cleared over at least once, and perhaps multiple times in some parts. Wood was used to construct buildings, build fences, cook and provide fuel for hungry fireplaces in winter. Any excess could always be sold for good money as cordwood in New York City. Indeed, cordwood was by far the most important cash crop in the early 19th century. The numerous locust trees that still grow on the property were valued for the long-lasting fence posts they produced. Even the hedgerows and fence lines probably contained far fewer trees than they do today, since the constant grazing by sheep and cattle prevented regeneration of trees.

Perhaps the biggest changes in the 20th century have taken place on the northern third of the property. This area was entirely cleared by the early decades of the 19th century for use as pasture. By the 1850s, the Hallocks were even planting 30 acres of corn in the hilly and thin soils between the pond and the bluffs, although yields were apparently disappointing. Gradually, starting late in the 19th century, the pastures and fields nearest the Sound shore were abandoned and allowed to grow back into woodland. Early 20th century Hallock photographs show the area around their pond still mostly cleared, but with scattered glades of trees already 20 or more feet tall.

Writing in the 1930s, David Halsey Hallock was amazed at how rapidly cedar trees had overtaken the area in the previous 40 or 50 years. He assumed that large colonies of what he called “cliff swallows” – probably the bank swallows that still colonize the clay pinnacles in the area – were responsible. The whole northern third of the farms once owned by the Hallocks, except where later disturbed by the Levon project, is now covered by a dense tangle of second-growth forest probably at least 120 years old in parts mixed with old fields abandoned in the middle decades of the 20th century.

Further east, the Howells also grazed livestock on the hilly northern parts of their property, using the spring up in that area as a convenient source of water. Alice Downs describes the wooded thickets on the northern part of her property as “impenetrable” when she first moved there in 1932. Most likely, this area was never planted with cultivated crops and has not been cut over for at least a century now.

Camp William Carey

The Boys Club of New York opened Camp William Carey in 1903. For several years previously, the Club had been sending boys from the Lower East Side of New York out to a camp on Plum Island on property belonging to Abram S. Hewitt, a former Mayor of New York. However, when the army needed to expand Fort Terry in 1902, the Boys Club decided to acquire a permanent location and name it after the prominent New York editor, William Carey. Initially, they purchased just 30 acres in the northwest corner of the current KeySpan property.

According to the camp’s 1925 “Information Bulletin,” the facility accommodated about 2,500 boys per summer, with 500 new campers ranging from 8-15 years old arriving by bus every other Monday for two-week stays. The camp was part of the Boys Club’s mission “to begin to make useful American citizens out of the undisciplined children of foreign immigrants.” The camp boasted 4 baseball diamonds, 2 basketball courts, 2 volleyball courts and lots of open space for other outdoor activities. The boys were housed in large dormitories. There was a dining hall and a recreation hall. The boys went swimming twice a day, hiked and enjoyed evening entertainment programs. After additional improvements in 1929, the camp even touted that all the boys would be able to take hot showers two out of three days! A newspaper article that year claimed it was “one of the most outstanding camps of that sort in the country.”

The architecture was typical boys camp. The dormitories were low to the ground, with long roof overhangs. The windows had no glass – just screens and shutters. The camp never had true “indoors plumbing” – just latrines with open cesspits beneath.¹

In 1944, Carey Camp, as it was generally called, bought additional property to the east, including the north end of the Hallock farm, bringing its total holdings to about 125 acres. The camp owned most of Hallock’s Pond, which campers called “the Lake” and used for swimming and picnics, and considerable

¹ One ex-camper recalled that the smell of the latrines was so bad, that he delayed going to them for the first three days after his arrival. Then, in desperation, he snuck off into the woods at night. Unfortunately, the leaves he used gave him a terrible case of poison ivy in a most embarrassing spot. The case got so bad, the poor eight-year-old away from home for the first time had to go to the camp nurse. She, of course, wanted to know how he got poison ivy *there*. And, he had to tell her!

undeveloped woodland to the east. The camp's most outstanding feature, however, was approximately a half-mile of Long Island Sound beach – although campers apparently preferred swimming in “the Lake” with its sandy bottom and fresh water to the rocky shore of the Sound.

Carey Camp operated for six decades. During that period, approximately 150,000 disadvantaged boys had the benefit of two weeks of Long Island summer. By the late 1940s, the Boys Club had moved to 111th Street on the East Side of New York and been taken over by the Italian immigrant community that still lived in that area. As a result, that group made up the vast majority of campers at that time. There were no blacks, no Jews and few non-Italians. But, for the favored few, camp only cost \$6.00 for a two-week adventure.

The author can remember being on his grandmother's farm, across from the entrance to the camp as busloads of excited and screaming boys arrived every-other Monday morning. When the buses left two weeks later, their young passengers were much more subdued, sad to be leaving. Now, all that is left of Carey camp are the tree-lined paved road along the west edge of the KeySpan property, foundations, fences, the garbage incinerator and the mature shade trees that still grace its former grounds – and presumably the memories of thousands of ex-campers.

One of those ex-campers recently queried the *News Review* for information about the camp. He recalled: “As a young boy I dispersed two (two week) stints at the William Carey Camp for Boys, in Jamesport, LI. I'm unsure of the year but at that time reveille was a song about a horse named Beetle Bomb, as well as, all the great tunes from South Pacific. It was a magical time for a city kid, bussing to Jamesport, fresh from The Boy's Club of Manhattan, four thirsty hours on a rickety yellow bus. God, did I love it. There was a small lake that was used for picnics, and of course, the wonderful white-pebbled beach at the bottom of the cliffs, watching the dolphins frolic, all summer long.”²

Riverhead Harbor Industrial Park

In 1963 Levon Corporation, controlled by George Semerjian then of Port Jefferson, presented a plan to the Town of Riverhead for a \$250-million industrial park on the KeySpan property. The project centered around a huge deep-water harbor – hence the original name “Riverhead Harbor Industrial Park.” The large-scale artist's rendition used at the Town Board meeting showed a half-mile square enclosed harbor surrounded by flat sea-level land covered with dozens of sleek, clean industrial buildings. One ocean-going ship is shown maneuvering in the harbor while another approaches the twin jetties protecting the harbor entrance. Two more large ships are tied up along the shores. The plan even included a “waterfront garden apartment colony” for workers in the industrial

² News Review, 06-13-02.

complex, with its own marina. Completion of the entire project was projected for 1973, with the first berthing facilities to be completed by July 1966.

The Riverhead Town Board unanimously approved the plan, which required downzoning the property from agricultural/residential to industrial, at a two-hour public hearing December 5, 1963. William J. Leonard, then Supervisor of Riverhead, declared himself “very satisfied” with the plan, despite opposition from “some few people [who] feel they will be hurt.” He was especially pleased that the 125 acres formerly owned by Camp Carey would now be on the tax roles – at industrial tax rates – causing the tax base to be “greatly improved.”

Few apparently noted the improbability of a plan that involved digging a half-mile square harbor through bluffs over 100 feet tall. By Levon’s own calculation, it would be necessary to remove 40 million cubic yards of soil to complete the project. This apparently was seen as a necessary cost of building the wonderful project. A New York paper called the plan for an industrial park with its own harbor “unusual,” but nevertheless described its proposed features at some length as if they were quite realistic. According to the paper, Semerjian had formed the Levon Company specifically for the project and had spent \$1 million “in cash” to purchase the 520 acres previously occupied by Camp Carey and nine farms.

In explaining their decision to sell, one of the former landowners explained that there had been a series of disastrous years for potato farming in the 1950s and early 60s. The \$2,000 per acre that Levon paid for the property provided a welcome way to pay off mortgages and to exit the potato business.

Miss Ella Hallock, then near 80 and the last family member still living in the old homestead, was a holdout in selling to Semerjian. According to family accounts, she was not too enthusiastic about selling her farm for this project. However, a neighbor recently retired from farming who wanted to sell his farm to be part of the project, called on Miss Ella. He argued that if she didn’t agree to sell her farm, none of the other landowners – most of whom apparently wanted to sell – would be able to do so. Moreover, he told Miss Ella that she was “standing in the way of progress” and that this project was going to be wonderful for the future of Riverhead. In the end, she sold, but retained life rights to live in the old family homestead.

In March of 1967, New Jersey-based Curtiss-Wright Corporation bought a controlling interest in Levon Properties. Curtiss-Wright was a proud old aeronautics company that traced its roots to aviation pioneers Wilbur and Orville Wright and Glenn Curtiss in the first decades of the 20th century. It is unclear exactly why Curtiss-Wright became involved in the Levon Project. It may have been the result of a new management team that took over the company in the 60s and pushed a variety of diversification efforts to lessen its dependence on airplane engines. The company still exists today as a \$800 million, New York

Stock Exchange listed, diversified manufacturing and service enterprise, but has long since exited the land development business.

After the Curtiss-Wright transaction, Semerjian remained in charge and retained a 20% direct interest in the property. In the time between the initial announcement and the Curtiss-Wright deal, Semerjian was busy getting necessary permits from state and federal authorities. The Army Corps of Engineers granted the dredging permit in 1965. New York State granted Levon land under water necessary for the construction of an entrance to the harbor. The New York State Water Resources Commission and the Suffolk County Health Departments issued permits in 1967 for a well to draw fresh water for sand and gravel washing.

Shortly afterwards, work began on building the first of two proposed 550-foot stone jetties to protect the harbor mouth. The initial proposal was to construct the jetties only out to a water depth of 14 feet and to dredge the channel and harbor to the same depth – sufficient for sand barges but certainly not for the deep-water shipping originally envisioned. Excavation and dredging began in September 1967.

A 1968 article in the *New York Times* called the project “one of the biggest ever conceived for the Long Island shoreline.” It noted that the operation had “drawn its share of skepticism” and that some critics claimed the whole thing was just “an elaborate veil of a sand and gravel mining operation” with the real profit coming from that business rather than the sale of industrial property. However, the article also quoted Mr. Semerjian vigorously denying these charges, saying that profits from the sale of excavated material were being used to develop the harbor. The same article described Semerjian as confidently estimating that the first industrial plant would be operating on the harbor within three years. He offered a vision of a new harbor that would provide a chance to bypass New York’s harbor with all of its transportation problems. Moreover, he noted that the Long Island Expressway was expected to pass a mile to the south and that plans were underway to build a bridge from Eastern Suffolk to New England. How could his project fail?

In another newspaper article from the same period, Mr. Semerjian was more forthright about his intentions, openly discussing “barging sand and gravel out to customers.” He added that he expected “enough materials should be removed from the bluff and hill areas to start preparing industrial building sites around the harbor by the end of [1968] or early 1969.” He added: “Of course we could concentrate on mining an area to the required level and digging a waterway to any industry that wanted to move out here before that time.” He added, “depending on the need for building materials, it should take about two years to complete the mining of the harbor.”

All the references in the above quotes to “mining”, “sand and gravel,” and “customers” made Mr. Semerjian’s true intentions relatively transparent. The same newspaper article mentioned that Semerjian’s company was involved in a project in Montauk where 580 acres of bluffs were also to be “mined for sand and gravel building materials” and then developed for industrial use. However, even if Riverhead’s leaders understood the likely intentions of Mr. Semerjian, the town was apparently not concerned about sand mining and did not yet have any ordinances regulating or prohibiting the activity.

The First Nuclear Proposal

Just as work was commencing on the harbor, the New York State Atomic and Space Development Authority announced that it was planning a \$4.5 million atomic powered seawater desalination and electric generating plant on the site. Mr. Semerjian either sold or transferred about 45 acres in the northeast corner of the site to the Authority for the plant. The Authority optimistically projected that the plant would be operating in two years, i.e., by 1969.

It is unclear why New York even had an Atomic and Space Development Authority, let alone why it was building a desalination plant. There was no pressing need for fresh water on Eastern Long Island and the technology was largely untested. At any rate, no further work was apparently done on the project, which soon disappeared from view.

Project Undone by its Jetties

The first jetty on the west side of the cut through the shoreline had barely been completed when it started to cause severe erosion of the cliffs for more than a half-mile immediately to the east. Local property owners became alarmed as recession of the Sound Shore bluffs accelerated, threatening to undermine a number of homes and topple them into the water. Otis Pike, the Democratic congressman from Riverhead then representing the East End, led the opposition to the jetties. In late 1969, he publicly accused Curtis-Wright of being nothing more than a sand mining operation.

According to Pike, “There has been an almost fraudulent sale of this project to the town board.” He charged that “they (Levon) keep calling it an ‘industrial park’ and it’s a sand and gravel operation. That’s all it is and that’s all it’s been. It’s much easier to sell a phony industrial park than a real sand operation, so they disguise it. This is exactly what they have done and they’ve gotten away with it.”

Pike claimed that if Levon really wanted a harbor, it would have chosen a low point in the shoreline rather than “120-foot high” cliffs. “If you want to build a harbor, you don’t pick the highest point on the bluffs of the North Shore.” On the

other hand, according to the Congressman, it was the ideal site if what “you want [is] sand and gravel.”

In 1970, this opposition focused on Levon’s request from the Army Corps of Engineers for renewal of their dredging permit. Pike led opponents, including the League of Women Voters, environmental groups and about 800 area residents, who crowded into a contentious 6-hour hearing held in Riverhead on February 13, 1970 at the Roanoke Avenue School Auditorium. Pike charged that Levon had misled Riverhead’s planning board, that the company had not kept its word and that the project was nothing but a mammoth sand and gravel operation. The only support for Levon came from then-supervisor, Bruno Zaloga, and David Kemper, the town’s Industrial Commissioner. They were roundly booed by the crowd when they stated that there was no danger to water supplies and expressed their continued confidence that the area would one day become the promised deep-water seaport.

The vigorous opposition prompted a lengthy letter in the *News-Review* from former Riverhead Supervisor Robert B. Vojvoda, who was in office for most of the time since the initial approval of the project and had served previously on the planning board. In his letter, Vojvoda vigorously defended Levon Properties and its project, which he claimed to have visited every two weeks for the previous five-and-a-half years. He accused opponents of being driven solely by political agendas. He pointed out that Riverhead was the only Eastern Suffolk town with a master plan and claimed that the town had been “following it diligently for the past five years.” He noted that the industrial project on the Levon property was important for the “overall growth pattern” of the town. He further noted that there had been “months of tests” and hearings by the NY State Water Resources Commission answering “all conceivable questions” about the project before deciding the project could go ahead “without any problems for the residents of Riverhead.”

He dismissed as “hogwash” allegations that Levon’s jetties were causing erosion to the east. He further noted that the record of Levon had been “faultless” over the previous six years in meeting the fourteen restrictions imposed by the planning board when it approved the project in 1963. He added that when Riverhead adopted its first sand and gravel ordinance in 1969 requiring bonding and filing of topographical and rehabilitation plans, Levon properties was “the first to meet all requirements.” His concluding reason to support Levon was that the company had been very generous providing topsoil whenever it was needed for playground, parks and parking lots in Riverhead, even offering to load it into town trucks for free – thus saving considerable taxpayer dollars.

The property owners east of the Levon property next went to state court. The New York Attorney General’s office joined the case after determining that homeowners had lost “alarming amounts of cliff-top property to the undercutting action of the winter seas.” In mid-1971 the court issued an order forcing

Curtiss-Wright to tear down the jetties and close off the entrance to the would-be port. The west jetty was already removed by that October, with the other one under court order to be torn down by year-end.

In 1972, the property owners also filed a lawsuit in civil court, where progress was slow. However, in 1980 they won over \$5 million in damages from Curtiss-Wright, even though that company had long-since disposed of the property to LILCO.

Less than three months after the contentious February 1970 Corps of Engineers hearing about erosion caused by Levon's jetties, the project came under attack by the federal Water Pollution Control Administration because of problems with a well on the property used for washing sand and gravel. Opponents claimed the well was drawing 1.5 million gallons of water a day, causing salt water intrusion. When the federal agency discovered the firm had not complied with a Corps of Engineers' order to build two discharge basins, it ordered the well shut down immediately until an investigation could be completed. Both state and county regulators in turn reopened hearings on the project.

Interestingly, Riverhead's two newspapers not only took opposing sides in the arguments but took sides opposite their current editorial stances. David J. Willmott, editor of *Suffolk Life*, called the whole situation a "public scandal." He approvingly quoted Otis Pike's scathing comments about the project and stated that Supervisor Zaloga's reassurances were "very hard to believe."

A few weeks later, an editorial in Riverhead's other paper, the *News Review*, quoted a new report by the NYS Water Resources Commission indicating that "Levon had been operating well within the terms of the application" after all because the commission investigation determined that Levon had actually pumped only 24 million gallons in the two years since the permit, not the 1.5 million gallons daily that opponents had charged. Moreover, the investigation found that almost all of the water was being recharged into the ground, so saltwater intrusion was unlikely. The commission did, however, acknowledge that the well *was capable* of pumping 1.5 million gallons a day if operated full time on a 24-hour basis.

The *News-Review* editorial denounced the February meeting as "distasteful" and claimed it was characterized by a "great deal of misinformation" on the part of the vociferous opponents of the project. The editorial went on to praise "the caliber of men in office" such as Supervisor Zaloga "who refused to succumb to the pressure of the audience" or "bow to the hysteria of the moment" by disavowing the Levon well permit. The *Review's* editorial concluded by stating how important it was to "show our confidence" in the capabilities of elected officials.

By the time the Levon project was effectively shuttered in the early 1970s, it had scarred much of the central portion of the shorefront along Long Island Sound

and the area behind it stretching back almost as far as the current farmlands. Semerjian's operations never encroached on the far eastern part of the property, perhaps in part because any plans for operations within 500 feet of the town border would have required an extra layer of approval from the Suffolk County Planning Commission, while operations in Southold would also have required that town's approvals. He also never disturbed any of the agricultural portions of the property, perhaps because keeping the land in farming may have allowed him to enjoy the benefits of agricultural tax rates on that portion of the property. And, thankfully, he never encroached on beautiful Hallock's Pond, which remained pristine through his ownership.

LILCO's Nuclear Power Plants

In 1973, Curtiss-Wright sold the entire parcel to the Long Island Lighting Company for approximately \$2 million. Just a year after starting construction on its ill-fated Shoreham project, LILCO announced plans for four nuclear power plants on the Riverhead property. LILCO's partner in the project was to be the New York State Electric and Gas Corporation. A headline in the *News-Review* of July 4, 1974 declared: "Amid concrete bones of Levon Corporation's Jamesport sand mining fiasco, the nuclear age will come to eastern Long Island." Accompanying photographs showed the concrete hulks of structures Levon left behind after abandoning its operations.

Another huge battle ensued with local residents, who were already aroused by LILCO's nuclear construction in Shoreham. During the 6-year controversy over LILCO's Riverhead nuclear proposal, battle lines divided in now-familiar ways. On one side were environmentalists and many concerned local citizens. On the other side were Riverhead Town officials, including then-supervisor Allen M. Smith, who argued that the project would create much needed local jobs and would increase the town's tax base. LILCO itself estimated that at its peak, 4,000 jobs would be created at the site.

Smith and his town board allies won re-election at least twice after LILCO's nuclear plans in Riverhead were announced, each time running on a platform favoring nuclear power plants and their much-heralded benefits. Another town board member at the time, dentist Dr. Francis E. Menendez, was quoted as saying there were "a lot of things that the town could do with the increased revenue." He went on to argue that because the town was losing "hundreds of acres of land and tax dollars" each year to the county's farmland preservation program, it was "getting more difficult to maintain our existing tax base." He concluded "we want nuclear power because we know that they're clean, but we would be delighted to have any kind of power plant out here."

Opponents argued about jeopardized water supplies, increased traffic during construction, destruction of the countryside and overall health and safety issues.

Proponents, as the *New York Times* noted in an November 12, 1978 article on the plant, were “strenuously arguing the inevitability of progress and the need for cheap power.” The utility company acknowledged that “there’s a very vocal minority out on the East End opposed to nuclear power and they won’t quit,” but expressed confidence that it would prevail and build the two plants.

In the end, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission gave the company approval for the first of two 1150-megawatt nuclear powered plants. However, in 1980 the state’s Nuclear Siting Board, composed of heads of various state agencies, denied the application after the intervention of then-Governor Hugh Carey.

The most visible reminder from the property’s atomic era is the 500-foot tower still standing near the southeast corner of the property. It was erected by LILCO to gather wind and other meteorological data that might be useful in planning an evacuation in case of the accidental release of radioactive material.

LILCO’s Coal Powered Plant

After New York State rejected LILCO’s proposal for two nuclear plants on the Sound Avenue property, the company proposed building an 850-megawatt coal-fueled plant on the site. By the end of 1980, it had applied for and received approval for the project from the New York State Public Service Commission. State officials noted that the proposed plant would help reduce the need to burn foreign oil and would enhance the reliability of the local and statewide electric supply system. In November of the following year, LILCO agreed to accept the terms of New York State’s certification for the coal fired plant, but scaled back the size of the project, then slated for completion by 1992. It abandoned the project entirely as it ran into increasing difficulties with its Shoreham plant, difficulties that eventually resulted in the closure of that plant and the near-bankruptcy and forced sale of the company.

Founding of the Hallockville Museum

A group of concerned local residents began meeting in 1975 to devise a way to save the Hallock homestead and the deteriorating farm structures surrounding it. By this point, the house and most of the other former Hallock farmsteads along Sound Avenue belonged to LILCO. Miss Ella Hallock, then a spry 90 years old, was still living in the old family home under her life tenancy. From the beginning, LILCO cooperated with the group trying to get the museum operating. Initially, the company allowed the group to use the Naugles barn for meetings. In 1977, LILCO leased it for 10- years to the fledging museum, for \$1 per year. At that time, plans were developed to turn all of the old Hallock houses along Sound

Avenue into centers for traditional crafts. LILCO cooperated by boarding up the abandoned structures and repairing the roofs.

Two years later, when the single faucet in her kitchen froze, Miss Ella was forced to move to a nursing home in Riverhead where she lived until her death, just after her 100th birthday in 1985. Then the museum began using the homestead itself and the surrounding grounds. In 1981, after Miss Ella ceded her life-tenancy rights, LILCO donated the homestead, the surrounding farm structures and two-and-a-half acres of land to the museum. Subsequently, the complex was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1997, after unsuccessful attempts to arrange an additional donation from LILCO, the museum purchased 5 more acres from the company for \$100,000, bringing the museum's holdings to 7.5 acres. This new parcel included a small piece east of the Homestead and property extending to the west almost to Herricks Lane, including the 1930s Cichanowicz house and the site of Isaiah Hallock's barn. KeySpan later donated a large barn built by the Naugles family, which the museum then moved onto this new property and has recently restored.

The Sound Avenue Historic Corridor

The whole Sound Avenue frontage of the KeySpan property is part of the Northville Historic District listed about 1975 with the New York State Division for Historic Preservation. As part of that process, "Building-Structure Inventory Forms" for each of the buildings on the property were filed with the state agency. At the same time, Sound Avenue and the structures along it were declared part of an Historic Corridor by both the Town of Riverhead and by act of the State Legislature.

Current Status

After the death of LILCO's proposals for both nuclear-powered and coal-powered plants on the Riverhead site, the property sat idle, apparently lost in LILCO's tribulations as ever mounting problems with the Shoreham facility pushed the company into a close brush with bankruptcy. It was only rescued by a 1989 deal with New York State in which the company surrendered the plant in return for a state bailout. It took another three years for the final decommissioning decision. Finally, in 1998, after most of LILCO's assets passed to the Long Island Power Authority, the remnants of LILCO merged with Brooklyn Union to form KeySpan Energy Corporation. As part of this transaction, the surplus Riverhead property came under the control of KeySpan.

Throughout this period, farming continued on the roughly 300 acres of agricultural land, with the Kujawski family on the western half and the Cichanowicz family on the eastern half. The latter sold their home farm across

the street to Martha Clara Vineyards and gave up farming in 2001, except for about 10 acres of herbs one of the brothers continues to grow on the KeySpan land. KeySpan was reluctant to enter into new leases with other farmers, so most of the land once cultivated by the Cichanowiczses has sat fallow for the last two years. The only exception is the old Hallock farm behind the museum, which the Long Island Antique Power Association, working with the museum, has been planting with historically appropriate crops since 2001.

Postscript

This history of the KeySpan property is based in large part on material collected by Mrs. Virginia Wines, the author's mother, who compiled a massive quantity of local history material into a series of twenty-three large albums donated to the Hallockville Museum after her death in 1993. The author has attempted to make this account as unbiased as possible. However, in the interest of full disclosure, it should be noted that Mrs. Wines, along with her friends Estelle Evans and Dr. Carol Granttham, were active opponents of both the Levon deep-water port and the LILCO nuclear power plants proposed for their backyards. The *New York Times* even gave Mrs. Wines the last word in its 1978 article on the latter controversy: "We knew from the beginning that we were fighting Goliath when we took on LILCO, but then, David won and I think we can too. A lot of people just don't want to see those plants there."

On another note, the KeySpan property is often referred to as being in Jamesport. It is part of the Jamesport Fire District and shares a telephone exchange with Jamesport. However, neither the Hallocks nor other residents of the area ever thought of themselves as living in Jamesport. Instead, from at least the middle of the 19th century, the area was considered part of the hamlet of Northville. To avoid confusion, I have referred to the site as the *Riverhead* KeySpan property.

Apparently, Carey Camp a century ago may have been the first entity to apply the "Jamesport" label to this part of Northville. Perhaps, the camp used a Jamesport post office address, since none was available in Riverhead. At any rate, the subsequent owners of the property – including the Levon Corporation, LILCO and KeySpan – all referred to it as "Jamesport." They have had lots of company. The local papers, as well as local town officials, have also often used the designation, despite protests from local residents that it was really "Northville."

The name "Jamesport" has a vagrant history. James Tuthill first coined it about 1832 when he purchased Miamogue Point, laid out a street grid for an ambitious whaling port and named it "James' Port" after himself. After the railroad came through in 1844, the first post office was set up. Although it was located on the main road, it was called "Jamesport." The name replaced the hamlet's old

names of “Old Aquebogue” or “Lower Aquebogue.” Late in the century, when the inhabitants of the original “Jamesport” wanted their own post office, they had to settle for “South Jamesport.” Then, in the 20th century, the name Jamesport began migrating further north. Hamlet boundaries have never been officially designated, so confusion is likely to continue.

Other sources used include:

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Mather, Frederic Gregory, *The Refugees of 1776 from Long Island to Connecticut*, 1913

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Wines, Virginia M., *Pioneers of Riverhead Town*, 1981

Estelle Evans, Mike Sacco, Lois Young and Alice Downs have provided additional information.