

**TOWN OF RED HOOK  
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting  
April 14, 2010

Members present: Chairwoman Brenda Cagle, Susan Ellis, Zoie Riel, Denis Collet, Laurie Husted, Dr. Jane Ferguson, Molly Williams

Guests: Councilwoman Micki Strawinski, Councilman Bill O'Neill, Planning Consultant Michele Greig

Chairwoman Brenda Cagle called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M. The minutes of the March 10 meeting were approved with a motion made by Jane Ferguson and seconded by Laurie Husted. The readings on the photovoltaic meters were 6002 kWh in the hall and 5070 kWh downstairs.

**VERNAL POOL SURVEY:** Brenda Cagle reported that the Vernal Pool Survey is finally underway. The past Saturday, Brenda, Nancy Guski and Eleanor Friery went out to a group of pools and finally found some salamander egg masses. Other groups will be going out in the next weekend.

**FOIL REQUEST:** Councilwoman Micki Strawinski asked if there was an update on the FOIL request for information about the Photovoltaic panel on the Town Hall. Brenda said that she did not have a report from Denise Barton.

**EARTH DAY - ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR AT DUTCHESS COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS:** Brenda Cagle reported that the Rhinebeck CAC would be doing its own table at the Environmental Fair. The Red Hook CAC hopes to be next to the Rhinebeck display. Hyde Park CAC will share Red Hook's space and possibly Clinton CAC will also. Red Hook will be doing a display on biodiversity. Brenda spoke with the promoter about the cost of the space, which the three towns will share.

Volunteers are needed to fill time slots for April 24 and 25 from 9:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M.; a time sheet was passed around for signatures. Laurie Husted asked if Katherine O'Reilly and her 8 students said that they were planning anything for Earth Day. Brenda said that she hadn't heard anything, but it would be good if they could be involved.

Making "toad abodes" again was suggested as a project. Jane Ferguson suggested doing a demonstration rather than a project. Laurie Husted said that she might be able to help on Sunday and would gather clay pots. Brenda noted that Rhinebeck CAC is laminating fact sheets on backyard wildlife habitat. Laurie noted that if Red Hook CAC had information to post, she could laminate it.

**CENTERS AND GREENSPACES PLAN:** Brenda introduced Michele Greig, Planning Consultant, who came to speak about the details of the Centers and Greenspaces Plan. The Plan has been a long term project of the Intermunicipal Task Force. She spoke of the US Green Building Council and the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) 2009 standards. They recognize that transportation is one of the largest carbon footprints.

- 1.) Location of development for qualification for LEED certification requires that new development be located near existing developed areas. Infill development and new development should be within ½ mile of businesses. The goal for the outlying area in Red Hook is to protect as much of existing agricultural lands as possible, those with prime and significant agricultural soils. With 1 dwelling per acre allowed, a developer would have to buy development rights to increase density.

- 2.) Development must be designed to be compact and walkable, using sidewalks, street trees and informal parking.
- 3.) Use of green infrastructures and green building practices would qualify a developer for a maximum of 29 points – not enough by itself to meet certification standards.

A build-out analysis under current zoning shows that the remaining undeveloped area in Red Hook could be divided into 3,600 units. The impact of that build out, Michele said, would be a loss to the Town of \$12 million in cost of services.

- 4.) Linkage to major transportation routes would give a maximum of 37 points. Brenda noted that there is a concern that even though the end result of implementing the Centers and Greenspaces Plan would be fewer units, projects would need to be phased to mitigate impacts. There is a potential of 200 more units in the Traditional Neighborhood area than current zoning allows.
- 5.) Neighborhood pattern and design give a maximum of 44 percent.

Denis Collett asked about the whole question of infrastructure to support the potential development. He noted that any developer in New York State proposing 50 units or more must provide central water. Brenda Cagle said that the Russell Urban-Mead hydrogeological study of Red Hook indicated that the aquifer showed sufficient groundwater recharge for the expected future development.

Michele Greig added that under the Centers and Greenspaces Plan the proposed build-out would be 1,300 units over 20 – 30 years. Denis asked what incentives were included to encourage clustering, and for developments to become LEED certified. Michele said that Conservation Subdivision Design is replacing cluster zoning. She noted that there is an agricultural conservation option whereby an owner can sell out development rights at the current zoning allowance, or develop at the more restrictive zoning that is proposed. CAC members asked who can buy the development rights. Michele said the Town, Scenic Hudson, Winnakee Land Trust or any other qualified trust could do so.

Laurie Husted asked how the Plan deals with industrial development. Michele Greig replied that currently there is a zoning provision for light industrial floating zones. Michele noted that she will be looking at the aquifer overlay zone to address protection of the aquifer. She added that only 25% of a minimum area lot size can be wetland, water body or stream. There is a new requirement that a developer has to deduct environmentally constrained lots before determining the allowable number of lots. The Centers and Greenspaces Plan amends the Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations and makes a small change to the Comprehensive Plan. Two additional amendments are the creation of an Agricultural Business District and a Traditional Neighborhood District. Also added to the Subdivision Regulations is a requirement upfront to identify a natural resources plan.

Michele Greig told the CAC that the Intermunicipal Task Force will be presenting the Environmental Impact Statement for the Centers and Greenspaces Plan to the Town Board at the meeting on April 28 and hope that it will be deemed complete in May. Brenda Cagle asked if the Russell Urban-Mead study was done before the location of the sewage treatment plant at the Red Hook Commons property.

The CAC thanked Michele Greig for speaking with the Council and updating members on the progression of the Centers and Greenspaces Plan.

#### **NEW YORK ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NYSERDA)**

**GRANT UPDATE:** Two grants were awarded to the Town, one for photovoltaic installation and one for energy management personnel. Councilwoman Micki Strawinski reported that the County

Legislative majority has decided to buy no hybrid cars for their fleet this year; 39 new vehicles are being purchased.

The CAC discussed having a press release about the grant awards. Noting that the grants are not at the purchase order or development of a job description stage, Denis Collet suggested that it would be premature. Sarah Brown of Malcolm Pirnie Associates is working on grant; she said that she is working on 7 or 8 similar grants. She will put together a purchase order, which then has to go back to NYSERDA for approval. Then the Energy Committee will have to put out a Request for Proposals (RFP). Denis Collet has spoke with Town Clerk about the last RFP for the small photovoltaic panel installed on the Town Hall, hoping to avoid any of the issues that came up there.

There is an issue of roof repair on the Town Hall. Denis spoke with Doug Strawinski and Purchasing Agent Ted Kudzy to see that the repair would be done before the new photovoltaic panels come. Ted said that the roof could be done by July.

The CAC discussed the other grant proposals. St. Margaret's Committee was not awarded an energy efficiency grant, but should try again. Though there was no official notification about the Composting Project grant, it was not listed on the awards. Denis Collet said that there is no direct relationship between the timing of the PV installation and the energy personnel grant. Brenda Cagle noted that the energy person should work 19 hours a week. The role and responsibilities of the Energy Manager need to be determined, as there was only a broad description in the grant proposal. Some ideas are that the Energy Manager will manage interns on climate inventory and implementation, develop content for the Town website and speak at the Environmental Management Council. Molly Williams suggested that the CAC look at desired skills and someone with good experience.

The next step is that Denis will contact Sarah Brown of Malcolm Pirnie Associates. Molly Williams will work on getting an intern for the June – January time frame. Brenda Cagle asked Molly of there had been any response to the \$600 offer for an intern; Molly said no.

Denis Collet said that the CAC should keep moving forward towards PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) assessment. If the Town keeps writing grants and works with adjacent communities to combine projects and share resources, there may be continued success.

**PACE CONFERENCES:** Denis Collet reported that he attended the PACE Conference in New Paltz. It was a good conference with over 300 people in attendance. Denis added that he may try to attend the upcoming PACE Conference at Pace University on April 23.

**PLANNING BOARD LINKS:** Brenda Cagle asked to have a rotation of CAC members to read and report on Planning Board issues. She asked Denise to be first with the March minutes, and Denis Collet to follow with a report on the two April meeting minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, May 12, 2010 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis

