

Draft

TOWN OF RED HOOK

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting

April 11, 2012

Members present: Chairwoman Laurie Husted, Mike Zelig, Susan Ellis, Sarah Imboden, Denis Collet, Dr. Jane Ferguson (7:51 P.M.) Absent: Karen Schneller McDonald, Zoie Riel, Anne Rubin

Guest: Councilwoman Brenda Cagle

CALL TO ORDER/QUORUM: Chairwoman Laurie Husted called the meeting to order at 7:28 P.M. A quorum of 5 members was present. Laurie confirmed that Mike Zelig has received his appointment as CAC member. The CAC welcomed him.

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 14, 2012 CAC MEETING: Sarah Imboden noted that under the Planning Board Minutes Review, page 2, paragraph 5, she had suggested that the CAC should have one liaison to review the Planning Board minutes, not necessarily to attend the meetings. The minutes were accepted as amended with a motion made by Laurie Husted and seconded by Mike Zelig.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION (DEC) SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS: Laurie Husted reported that Kyle McCluskey and Hudson Miller are the winners of the DEC Summer Camp scholarships. They attended the Tuesday Town Board meeting to receive their certificates from VFW Commander Bill Moore. Laurie added that both boys were accepted for the camp that they chose, so that they can go together. There should be press coverage of the awards, which should please the VFW, as they work hard to earn the money that they generously donate. Laurie added that the campers have always written a thank you letter to the VFW. Susan Ellis said that it is nice to have more positive community recognition.

FARMLAND PROTECTION PROGRAM: Laurie Husted announced that she had received a letter about CAC involvement in the Town Farmland Protection Program. According to Town officials, the CAC is not required to submit a letter on the applications, but that process may be changing. Brenda Cagle noted that the Town Board may combine the Community Preservation Fund Advisory Board and Farmland Protection Committee and the CAC may be asked to have a representative.

INTERMUNICIPAL TASK FORCE: Councilwoman Brenda Cagle noted that the Intermunicipal Task Force needs a CAC representative. Sarah Imboden asked for more information about the work of the Task Force. Brenda still attends, but is no longer an official member. She reported that the Task Force meets on Fridays from 8 A.M. - 9:30 A.M. or so. The Task Force has grant money to hire Michele Greig for planning advice. The current charge for the Task Force is to review the Historic Estate Area zoning to see that it provides the development that the Town would like. There also has been mention of river access for Town residents, and discussion with various landowners about their

intentions with their property. Brenda reported that at the last Friday meeting, the Unification Church had representatives attend. They have about 250 acres, and told the Task Force that they are working on creating plans for a graduate college. Sarah Imboden said that she would be interested in serving as a representative, but did not know that she could commit to every Friday. She suggested that she could try coming to one meeting to see, if that would be acceptable.

FACEBOOK SITE FOR THE CAC: Laurie Husted reported that Brenda Cagle has noted that St. Margaret's Committee has Town Board approval for using Facebook. She suggested that the CAC might consider what uses Facebook could be to the CAC. CAC members discussed how the CAC would use Facebook – to publicize events or environmental information.

Sarah Imboden asked about the CAC page on the Town website. Laurie said yes, the CAC does have a page, and all members should look at what is on there to see if any information should be added. She noted that the scholarships, Climate Action Plan information, energy information and some older items are on there. CAC members discussed changing the website and making it more attractive. Denis Collet said that it looks as if the CAC needs to upgrade its information.

Jane Ferguson joined the meeting at 7:50 P.M.

Sarah Imboden said that she is getting into Word Press, which costs about \$48.00 per year for website access. Laurie Husted said this is looking at the future of electronic communication, but noted that the Town Board would not have talked about an independent website yet, which Brenda Cagle confirmed. Brenda added that the Town Board was receptive to the Facebook page, but had some hesitation. They asked Dick Wambach to develop some guidelines, which he did. Susan Ellis said that there would be a use for Facebook, such as being a means of receiving feedback on CAC projects. There would need to be a focus and control. Laurie Husted noted that Sarah Imboden has been the first CAC member up to this point who has been interested in web design, and the CAC doesn't really know what it can do to manage it. Sarah said that she would look at the website and think about it. Denis Collet said that once the CAC gets involved in publishing more electronic communication, it can't allow what it publishes to get stale; someone has to proof read it, and it is a lot of work. Sarah agreed and said that she would continue to look at it and see what she learns with using Word Press.

Laurie Husted asked Brenda Cagle how the CAC would present to the Town Board a question about developing a website. Brenda suggested looking at the Town Facebook guidelines. Denis Collet said that before the CAC should propose anything like a website, it needs to determine who will manage it; who will be accountable. First the CAC should find out how effective the current website is. Dennis suggested that are two reasons to make this proposal, one is that there is more that the CAC wants to do than can be done on the current website, which needs to be explained, and the second part is accountability. Laurie Husted will investigate what information is needed to evaluate how the website and/or Facebook would fit the needs of the CAC.

RECYCLING BROCHURE: Laurie Husted asked CAC members to compare two versions updating the Recycling Brochure. The old brochure was tri-fold, and a new version is two sided poster style prepared by Zoie Riel. CAC members thought that the tri-fold is simpler and more straightforward.

Sarah Imboden said that the new version adds ideas on how to reduce waste, but they are interspersed with Recycling Center information, which can be confusing. Susan Ellis added that it is trying to accomplish two things, one to give a capsule of information that can be kept on the refrigerator telling what can be done with which type of item, and the second to try to get residents to change their habits by giving them ideas to reduce waste. They need to be separated and also in a form that is easy for the eye to follow. CAC members discussed placement of information on the brochure; with most agreeing that important recycling information should be in the middle and most visible, and suggestions and ideas on the sides or back. Sarah Imboden suggested that with the Publisher program, text boxes can be repositioned by dragging, minimizing the work. Laurie Husted suggested that the poster style could be useful as a bulletin board display. Brenda Cagle questioned how much the CAC should do to revise the Recycling Brochure since the trend is to move towards single stream recycling. CAC members decided that there is a need for the update, most of the information about what to recycle will be the same, and the number of brochures printed could be adjusted until changes are implemented.

Fee per bag: Sarah Imboden noted that in looking to compare costs of waste disposal to determine if it would be cheaper to bring garbage to the pick up at the Recycling Center, she could find no information on the Town website listing the fee per bag for the service. She suggested that the information should be on the CAC page on the website. Laurie Husted said that she would try to put the information together and put it on the website page.

E Waste: Sarah Imboden asked how the CAC wanted to handle e-waste on the brochure, as Zoie Riel had objected to the collection bin at the Recycling Center because it didn't comply with the State regulation to collect all e-waste. Brenda Cagle said that Recycling Center Manager T J Hackett reported that the bin fills quickly and he calls almost weekly to have it hauled, so the residents are making good use of it. Laurie Husted noted that Zoie's objection was that Royal Carting should take more than they do, that they are carting the high value items. Brenda Cagle said there is still a question of where is the product going and thinks that the Town must keep asking. She suggested that since there is a possibility that the e-waste collection will change, perhaps the brochure should reference it by noting that residents should ask at the Recycling Center for details.

Brenda Cagle reviewed the proposal before the Town Board from Maven, an electronics recycling company from Rochester NY, which she reported on at the March meeting. They would collect all electronics in Gaylord boxes and pay the Town about 3 cents a pound. Purchasing Agent Ted Kudzy is researching what deal he could get with Advanced Recovery.

TRAINING/CONFERENCES:

1.) Laurie Husted announced that there will be an all day Clean Water Act at 40 – Facing the Future conference at Vassar College on Monday, May 7, 2012.

2.) A Master Watershed Steward Training weekend will be held at Omega Institute on June 16 and 17, 2012. Laurie wants to send CAC representatives to both, thinking that Anne Rubin and Karen Schneller-McDonald might be interested. Susan Ellis said that she would be interested, depending on how many could go and how the time works out.

3. A Hydrofracking Forum will be held at Cary Institute on May 5, 2012 from 9 A.M. – 12 P.M.

ARBOR DAY/EARTH DAY APRIL 28, 2012: Laurie Husted said that plans for Arbor Day/Earth Day at Town Hall need to be made now. Last year Tree Commission Chairwoman Nancy Guski gave the CAC space and Sarah Imboden and Zoie Riel did the CAC table with Zero Waste posters, cleaning products and plastic bag information. Attendance was light and most who came said that they already did follow display suggestions. Sarah felt that there needed to be a more hands on activity or something new enough to be different. Laurie suggested buying clothes line and giving 50' lengths for people who would pledge to put one up in their yard. Brenda Cagle asked about doing a tire pressure check at the Recycling Center. Laurie said that she used students from the school environmental club; high school honor society students need community service and perhaps could help. Sarah Imboden suggested a Compost Awareness Weekend.

APPLE BLOSSOM DAY MAY 12, 2012: Laurie Husted noted that there will be an e-waste collection managed by Zoie Riel at Hardscrabble Plaza. Laurie reported that she has 4 out of the 5 pieces of artwork created for the bike racks. They are spheres with different themes. She did get a 5th artist who did a sphere with a bicyclist in Red Hook. A donor gave \$700 towards the project, so the artists will be paid \$200. To be determined is which site gets which sphere; Laurie will probably ask the 10% Challenge Committee to decide. Laurie said that there is interest in doing a ribbon cutting on Apple Blossom Day and a scavenger hunt idea with 5 pictures of the spheres asking if a participant can find them. Brenda Cagle noted that the committee has 11 gift certificates and \$150 that could be used for prizes for the scavenger hunt or other promotions.

Laurie Husted asked whether or not the CAC would have a table for Apple Blossom Day.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG TAKE BACK DAY: On April 28, 2012 from 10 A.M. – 2 P.M. the Red Hook Village Police Department will accept old and unwanted prescription drugs at the Red Hook Village Hall for proper disposal. Laurie said that CAC members would appreciate the reduction of these wastes in local water and the CAC should promote “don’t flush it.”

TOUR DE RED HOOK APRIL 29, 2012: A bicycle tour celebrating the Village to Village Trail though Bard College will be held on April 29 from 1 – 3 P.M.

RED HOOK CLEAN-UP DAY MAY 5, 2012: A gathering of volunteers to do roadside clean-up will be held on Saturday, May 5, 2012, meeting at the Town Hall at 2 P.M. Laurie Husted encouraged CAC members to participate.

350 DAY: 350 Day represents the number of parts per million of CO₂ that carbon dioxide levels need to be reduced to – the current level is 395 ppm. The day is May 5, 2102 and some Bard College graduate students have suggested having a volunteer with at Santa suit to answer questions about why climate change matters. As a small fundraiser, for a \$1, passersby would sit on Santa’s lap to hear about climate change. Laurie Husted suggested that she could ask Red Hook Mayor Ed Blundell to do a funky Santa and put an article in the Red Hook Observer. Denis Collet suggested having free seltzer showing

it as a proper use of CO2. Jane Ferguson suggested having a polar bear with a sign about the ice melting. CAC members liked the idea of a polar bear as appealing to a wider audience.

DONATION OF LAND FROM CONSOLIDATED EDISON: Brenda Cagle reported that when Consolidated divested the lands that it had bought to propose a power plant on the Red Hook/Clermont border, a small parcel of about 5 acres was not purchased because it is very wet. Now, Con Ed wants to donate the parcel to the Town. The Biodiversity Group assessment found a lot of diverse habitat and possible rare species associated with the parcel. The Town Board is questioning why the Town would want it, as Con Ed would stop paying taxes, approximately \$1,540 annually. Susan Ellis noted that Con Ed could just decide to stop paying taxes and it would default to the County. She added, that unless it could be joined to adjacent lands to make a viable open space conservation area, there isn't much reason to accept it. Perhaps there could be a compromise in tax amount. CAC members discussed options and could not determine any specific potential. Brenda said that she would ask the Biodiversity group.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday May 9, 2012 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary