

Draft

TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting

January 9, 2013

Members present: Chairwoman Laurie Husted, Dr. Jane Ferguson, Susan Ellis, Sarah Imboden, Denis Collet

Absent: Anne Rubin, Zoie Riel, Karen Schneller-McDonald, Mike Zelic

Guest: Ross Gould of Environmental Advocates of New York

CALL TO ORDER/QUORUM: Chairwoman Laurie Husted called the meeting to order at 7:20 P.M. A quorum was present.

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 12, 2012 MEETING: Laurie Husted noted that she would like to make an amendment to the Waste Subcommittee section on page 3. She said that Ulster County is not trying to make single stream recycling work. The County prefers dual stream recycling, but accepts single stream loads and transfers them. The minutes were approved as amended with a motion made by Jane Ferguson and seconded by Sarah Imboden.

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES REVIEW: Laurie read the report from Mike Zelic, who was absent, on the minutes of the Planning Board December 17, 2012 meeting. The Public Hearing on the Preliminary Subdivision Plat Approval for the Preserve at Lakes Kill project was continued. The Project Engineer stated that the development would meet standard site distance requirements by cutting back the grade of Feller-Newmark Road and removing existing trees. Sarah Imboden attended the meeting, and noted that The Planning Board had a report from an independent traffic engineer, who agreed that 11 lots would not significantly increase traffic, supported the site distance mitigation work proposed, but also recommended lowering the speed limit and advised that the bus stop be required to use the private road, and not stop on Feller-Newmark Road. The traffic engineer also gave his opinion that while the developers had done all the mitigation work that they could do, he would not recommend a development at that location, as the access never would be safe. Laurie said that the safety issue was not particularly a CAC issue, but if they proposed cutting a lot of trees it would be.

Laurie Husted added that she attended the January 7, 2013 Planning Board meeting for a presentation of the Bard College preliminary plan for Site Plan Approval for installation of a solar panel array behind the soccer field that would produce 300 megawatts of electricity per year. Denis Collet asked Laurie which company was awarded the bid for the project; Laurie replied Solar Tech Renewables. Denis asked why, and Laurie replied because they got a grant, which made the company more than competitive with current electric rates. Denis asked if it were a lease situation, which guarantees the

rates to the college. Laurie said yes. Laurie noted that because there were some artifacts found in the fields, the solar array needs to be separated into three different locations and will require some tree cutting. She added that there is also concern about Indiana bat habitat and other sensitive habitats. There was concern about timing and location of tree cutting relative to bat habitat. Laurie added that she did not know if the CAC would have other concerns, as the site would not be readily visible from the River or neighbors.

TOWN BOARD UPDATE FROM BRENDA CAGLE: Brenda Cagle sent the CAC several updates from the Town Board meeting on January 8, 2013.

Recycling Center: Royal Carting has changed its hours of fee per bag garbage pick-up to 7:30 A.M.– 12 P.M. on Saturdays. They say that Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regulations are the reason. Recycling Manager T.J. Hackett had many complaints, so Brenda has a call into DEC to see what can be done. Sarah said that she had arrived at 12:10 P.M. and was told by Royal Carting that she should know that they close at noon. She agreed that there will have to be public notice if the situation continues.

Bus shelters: Brenda has been in contact with Dutchess County Planning about bus shelters and they are sending the Town a contract, which is the first step. The Town needs to consider looking more at location of the shelters, as well as lighting and property ownership.

Conservation Easement Review Committee Report: The Committee gave its final report to the Town Board with a 4 to 1 vote favoring its recommendations. There was discussion, but no decision. Sarah Imboden served on the Committee and said that it was very interesting, with a lot of effort put into determining the financial implications of the Conservation Easement Program.

Intermunicipal Task Force: The Task Force will now move forward with an historic estates study.

30 DAYS OF FRACKING: Laurie Husted asked if any CAC members had participated in the 30 Days of Fracking comment forum e-mailed by Sandra Steingraber. Each day highlighted a different aspect of sections of the proposed regulations and the related impacts of hydrofracking, and asked for comments that would go to Governor Cuomo. Susan Ellis said that she was able to do some, though it is hard to know how helpful the comments are without scientific backing. Sarah Imboden said that she gave comments with the thought that just expressing a citizen's legitimate concerns is important enough.

ENERGY SUBCOMMITTEE: Laurie Husted gave an update on energy assessments. She gave out lawn signs for those who have had energy assessments /upgrades. Laurie had her assessment with Mike Bennett from Malcarne Contracting and is scheduled to receive the report. She would invite others to come for that meeting. There were questions about some of the computer models determining the efficiency and payback of potential upgrades.

Susan Ellis described some of the difficulties of her energy efficiency upgrades and the lack of New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) oversight. She noted that when blower door tests were done for evaluation of efficiency before and after, there was never an official report given; the response to the test results was that it was good. When a second contractor repeated the test, it did not meet the project goals. Jane Ferguson added that she also was not given a written report. Laurie Husted said that she would try to contact Bridget at Rural Ulster Preservation Company (RUPCO) to see if they could help get the test results. Jane said that on her second blower door test, she didn't think that the results were that dramatic, but she also did her upgrades in several steps. Denis Collet said that each particular upgrade should have an improvement value associated with it, so that subsequent projects should show incremental improvement. Sarah Imboden noted that the whole volume of the report on potential upgrades could be overwhelming and confusing. She said that one suggested upgrade for her report would take 50 years to pay back, but only have a life span of 30 years.

There was discussion of how a contractor's work is only as good as the performance of the employees and subcontractors. Denis said that there should be an impartial consumer advocacy group to help. The CAC felt that it would be helpful to have more information on completed upgrades to help advise others considering them.

Laurie Husted reported that there is an ad in the HudsonValley Mercantile advertising for energy assessments.

TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE: Laurie Husted reported that on Tuesday, January 8, she and Anne Rubin split the 5 P.M. – 7 P.M. time slot to do a bicycle/pedestrian count at the Route 9/ Route 199 intersection in the village. There is another count on Saturday, January 12 from noon – 2 P.M. Laurie asked for assistance with noon to 1 P.M. or 1 – 2 P.M. Sarah said that she would do 1 – 2 P.M. Laurie said that she would train Sarah and Mike, who also said that he would help.

Susan Ellis asked how many bicyclists/pedestrians were counted. Laurie replied that there were about 15 people for each 15 minute interval. That information has been sent to the County. Susan asked if there were many bicyclists. Laurie said that there were none.

CAC members discussed how frequently there are bicyclists and pedestrians traveling along Route 9 at dusk or later without adequate reflective material or lights. Sarah suggested that the Transportation Subcommittee could consider a program to distribute red flashing lights.

WASTE SUBCOMMITTEE - E-WASTE COLLECTION AND FOOD DRIVE ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 19, 2013: Sarah Imboden brought posters and card notices of the event; she also has a Subcommittee volunteer to give notices at the Winter Market held on the same day. The collection will be held from 10 A.M. – 1 P.M. at the Village parking lot.

Laurie Husted noted that it is a day of service at Bard College for Martin Luther King Day, so she should have student assistance, though often fewer show up than the number who sign up. All Town

and Village residents can bring electronic waste at no charge. Laurie added that Village Mayor Ed Blundell asked that Village of Red Hook residents who cannot bring their e-waste be able to request pick-up. Sarah Imboden suggested that perhaps the fact that there is a permanent roll-off for collection of e-waste at the Recycling Center will change the number of participants. Laurie asked if the Waste Subcommittee could design a notice to increase awareness that the Recycling Center collection is available.

ICLEI WEBINAR: Laurie Husted announced that there will be a webinar on a Solar Outreach Partnership to give communities choices energy sources. It will be broadcast on January 17, 2013 from 2 – 3 P.M. She hoped that available CAC members would listen to it. Denis said that he would try.

DEEP ENERGY RETROFIT: Denis Collet noted that Lloyd Hamilton, who has worked with him on his geothermal project, has an article in “The Chronogram” called Deep Energy Retrofit. It describes working towards energy conservation on older structures by changing the building envelope from the outside instead of the inside. Denis said that NYSERDA has been funding some projects of this type across the state, and one is for work that Lloyd is doing on his house. There is a shifting of the views of energy conservation, and the focus should be on the total building envelope and the building as a system. Denis added that there is a need to measure and monitor to see that the improvements have accomplished the energy reduction goal. There also needs to be a system that gives an alert when there is some failure in the energy measures, such as having a door not properly closed.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, February 13, 2013 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary