

Draft

**TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting
March 13, 2013

Members present: Chairwoman Laurie Husted, Susan Ellis, Dr. Jane Ferguson, Mike Zelic, Sarah Imboden (7:10 P.M.), Denis Collet (7:15 P.M.)

Absent: Anne Rubin, Ross Gould, Karen Schneller-McDonald

Guest: Councilwoman Brenda Cagle

CALL TO ORDER/QUORUM: Chairwoman Laurie Husted called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M. Laurie noted that it is not necessary to have a quorum to start a meeting.

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY CAC MEETING: The minutes of the CAC meeting for February 13, 2013 were approved with a motion made by Mike Zelic and seconded by Jane Ferguson.

UPCOMING DATES:

- 1.) *Salamander Crossings:* Laurie Husted asked for volunteers to be team leaders and participants for the salamander crossing project. Jane Ferguson thought that had happened already the night before. Laurie said that there were several events last year, and she expected multiple dates this year; the number depends on the rain events which promote salamander migrations. Laurie added that the project had six roads covered last night. There were some sightings and multiple casualties. Laurie sent out another e-mail for participants through the biology faculty at Bard College and had a good response.
- 2.) *Dutchess Regional Chamber of Commerce's Third Annual Green Symposium* will be held from 8 A.M. - 4 P.M. on April 30 2013 at Vassar College. Laurie encouraged any one with interest to attend.
- 3.) *Open Conversation on Land Conservation:* Laurie Husted announced that there would be a an Open Conversation on Land Conservation hosted by the Dutchess Land Conservancy at their office in Millbrook on March 26, 2013 from noon to 1 P.M. She suggested that if any CAC members were interested, she thought that there may be a program before or after. Brenda

Cagle noted that she thought that she and Supervisor Sue Crane would be going and could plan to carpool.

TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE: Laurie Husted put a link for members to complete the Dutchess County Bicycle/Pedestrian Survey, and asked them to encourage others to do so. Mike Zelig, Jane Ferguson and Susan Ellis said that they had done it. Laurie wants the County to count Red Hook and include it in their plans.

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES REVIEW: Mike Zelig was away, and the minutes from the Planning Board meeting on March 4, 2013 were not yet on the website. Laurie Husted attended the meeting and reported that the Bard College Solar Array proposal received site plan approval.

Sarah Imboden joined the meeting.

Preserve at Lakes Kill: The developer could not come, but his traffic engineer spoke about the Preserve at Lakes Kill project. The main issue was still the sight distance. Both the developer's traffic engineer and the consulting traffic engineer for the Planning Board agreed that with proposed grade changes, the site distance would be adequate under the Zoning Law. If the developer can't get a right-of-way from the neighbors, he will have to build a 100' retaining wall.

Laurie added that the developer did not talk about any property issues, such as stormwater, that would concern the CAC. Susan Ellis asked there had been any mention of the community septic system; Laurie said no.

WASTEWATER: Laurie asked Mike Zelig about wastewater, and he said that he is getting a package on maintenance of individual septic systems.

Denis Collet joined the meeting.

CAC BUDGET: Laurie Husted noted that the CAC budget came through at \$500, not the \$250 that was expected. She added that the payroll number came in at \$1254. Laurie asked if that was a reduced figure. Secretary Susan Ellis noted using the recorder and working to give details on complicated issues was taking more time than in earlier years. She said that she would have to check her W-2 statement to give the exact total. Brenda Cagle said that she would check on the figures that she was given for the Town Board.

WASTE SUBCOMMITTEE (RED HOOK RECYCLES): Sarah Imboden reported that she, Brenda Cagle, Laurie Husted, and Jeff Urbin went to the New Paltz ReUse Center on Tuesday. They toured the site, which includes a large shed, recycling

operations, composting, and a mulching operation. They were looking for ideas to improve Red Hook's Recycling Center, and the site manager has forwarded a lot of information to Sarah. They discussed the idea of a bimonthly meeting of Regional Recycling Coordinators for sharing ideas. Laurie added that the New Paltz operation is revenue positive; they are receiving money for the compost and mulch. Sarah said that they also make some money from items donated by businesses when they do renovations. Laurie said that it has become a one stop shopping center for useful items.

Composting: Sarah noted that the New Paltz ReUse Center has kept the composting a rather simple process, where they turn it occasionally. They had it tested to see if there were any problems with the composition, but found that it was fine. They can even take compostable take-out containers. Sarah added that she and Laurie Husted will attend a composting forum to learn ideas which could be used to start a composting operation in Red Hook.

Greenhouse gasses: Sarah reported that she went to the class of Bard Professor Jen Phillips, a sheep farmer who teaches a graduate course at Bard College in the Climate Studies Program. The class will do a greenhouse gas project. Sarah spoke with the students about the data that the CAC would like on greenhouse gasses produced by agricultural activities in Red Hook. The students brainstormed about ideas; this will be their class project and the CAC will learn what they develop by the end of the semester. They will give a report outlining what are the major producers of greenhouse gases and what best management practices might mitigate them.

Dutchess County Solid Waste Management Plan: Sarah Imboden noted that after the February Town Board presentation of the Plan, she attended a public comment meeting in Millbrook. She has drafted a page of comments for the CAC to review. From the comments at the Millbrook meeting, she thinks that all the CAC's are planning to sign on to a larger document of more detailed comments that the League of Women Voters Solid Waste Committee prepared. Sarah explained that the League is very active in solid waste issues in Dutchess and Ulster Counties and has done impressive work. Laurie asked if the comments were the ones sent by the Environmental Management Council (EMC) and if the CAC needed to sign on to it. Mike Zelig said that the EMC comments were separate. Laurie said that she would e-mail to ask about it. Sarah said that CAC members could review a copy of her drafted comments at the meeting or she could e-mail them. Laurie said that she had checked with Terry Laibach from the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) who will be reviewing the Plan, and said that what they are looking for most is suggestions. Laurie said that proposals such as what the C2B Technologies company could offer would be proactive suggestions. Sarah agreed.

RECREATIONAL PARK EXPANSION: Laurie Husted reported that she had spoken with Anne Rubin about what concerns the CAC should have about the proposed

Recreational Park expansion. CAC members looked at the site plan for the expansion on the west side of Linden Avenue. The site will have soccer and baseball fields with parking areas. Laurie added that the CAC is listed as an interested agency on the SEQR form, so the CAC needs to make a reply.

There are two small wetlands that Laurie noted are unregulated by the State, so no buffers will be required, and there is a small tributary to the Sawkill. Sarah Imboden said that at a Town Board meeting, the engineer for the project has said that they are trying to work around the wetlands. Laurie added that the Army Corps of Engineers has approved of the plan.

CAC members had questions about use of herbicides and pesticides; Laurie said that Recreational Park Director John Kuhn has already stated that he does not use them, so that is not a concern. Susan Ellis asked what might be used on parking and other paved areas, and suggested that run-off should be contained on site, so that there was no increase to the Sawkill Creek. Mike Zelig asked about the bathrooms and septic. Laurie said that there is an estimate of 1,400 gallons of water per day usage; Mike added that the number is significant. Laurie said that she would call John Kuhn and ask what the operation and maintenance plan will be for the fields and parking areas before the CAC submits a letter.

Denis Collet mentioned lighting and said that he had spoken with Doug Strawinski about lighting and had discussed solar lighting. Brenda Cagle said that she didn't think that lighting was planned. Laurie said that if there is going to be lighting, the CAC would recommend energy efficient lighting.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT: Laurie Husted asked Brenda Cagle if she needed anything from the CAC for the grant. Brenda said that the Town Board would welcome ideas, noting that the grant will be for transportation. Laurie suggested biking paths and trails; Brenda said also sidewalks and other transportation could be considered. The grant is for \$20,000. Brenda thought that the application deadline is in a month or two.

ENERGY SUBCOMMITTEE:

New York Solar Smart Grant: Laurie Husted reported that the NY Solar Smart Grant needs to be done this year. Brenda Cagle added that the Town Board had approved Town participation that covers 60 hours over two years. Laurie Husted committed the CAC for two hours a month. Denis Collet asked what the CAC is doing. Brenda Cagle replied that participating in conference calls or study groups or something similar. Brenda noted that there are two teams, and one has worked on phase 1 of the solar rooftop challenge. They mapped the potential rooftop solar locations in New York City;

Brenda added that they are looking to take what they learned from that project and spread it to other communities. Red Hook was chosen as one. That will require money or an in kind match (the 60 hours). The goal of the study is to reduce the soft costs of solar installations, as 30% of the costs of photovoltaic installation is not hardware or materials. Brenda said that the Town Board voted on Tuesday to send the letter of commitment. Denis Collet asked what happens at the end of the project. Laurie said there could be potential for a solar vending zoning code, improvements in net metering, interconnection standards for implementation and increased access to financing.

Green Business Challenge: Laurie Husted asked Brenda Cagle if the Green Business Challenge group is still waiting to deliver to the Town whatever they project they would like the Town to work on; Brenda replied that by the end of the month the Town would get a guide book. There was no further information, so Laurie tabled discussion to next month.

Energy Assessments: Laurie Husted noted that it is hard to track the numbers of energy assessment applications, and the Subcommittee is encouraging on line applications. In the last few weeks, members met with two church congregations (St. John's Episcopal in Barrytown and St. John's Dutch Reformed in Upper Red Hook) and lined them up with the not-for-profit process of the energy assessments. Hopefully that will make them encouraged to recommend that their congregants do assessments for their homes. Laurie added that the Red Hook Library is doing one. Laurie hopes that more successful stories will spread the word and accelerate the process. Brenda Cagle said that Supervisor Sue Crane is doing one and other Town Board members are potentially. Jane Ferguson reported that she had a call from someone who say the “I did the energy assessment sign” on her lawn. Laurie added that there was one call from the ad in “The Mercantile.”

Susan Ellis mentioned that her neighbors have purchased insulating materials and rented equipment to do weatherization without going through a NYSEERDA program, because they were able to the work for much less money. There are probably others who are conscious of saving heating and electric costs who will not show up in the system. Laurie said that they would still qualify for a free energy assessment to see how their performance compares to a standard.

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCILS (CAC)/CONSERVATION

ADVISORY BOARDS (CAB): Laurie Husted said that she has obtained a copy of The Primary Responsibilities of CAC's and CAB's. The CAC has discussed the option of becoming a CAB; Laurie thought that members should look at what the group should already be doing. She will scan it and send it around for CAC member consideration. Denis Collet asked if the CAC had a list of the pros and cons to becoming a CAB. Sarah Imboden said that she will work on a comparison for next month.

Laurie Husted said that she had reviewed some requirements for a CAB, which said that there must be an inventory and map of all open areas and wetlands accepted by the municipality. Brenda Cagle noted that she had found a file for Natural Resources Inventory. Susan Ellis replied that it was probably outdated, but that later work done by the Geographic Information Services (GIS) of the Environmental Management Council (EMC) mapped steep slopes, soils, water resources and other resources could be helpful. The Open Space Plan adopted by the Town might qualify as the open space index. Susan added that there may be a requirement to keep it updated. She also noted that her memory of classes on open space index plans included taking the land use of parcels and ranking the available open space. Brenda Cagle said that now the Town has a Community Preservation Plan, which does that; she thought that with the Open Space Plan and Community Preservation Plan the CAC could get approval as a CAB. Brenda added that her memory of the distinction of a CAB is that it requires the Planning Board to send copies of plans brought to the Board to the CAC, which then would have to submit comments in a specific time period. There is no requirement that the recommendations be followed.

There was discussion of what time would be spent in the office reviewing plans, and Sarah Imboden suggested having someone from the Rhinebeck CAB come to meet with the CAC when we discuss the CAB option. Sarah said that she thought that if the CAC became a CAB, the CAC would need to be more prepared for addressing special issues with development proposals.

EDUCATIONAL CALENDAR: Laurie Husted noted that as one of the obligations of the CAC is environmental education, she had been given a suggestion of creating a calendar with environmental tips. Susan Ellis said that the CAC had done one many years ago.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday April 10 at 7:P.M., at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary

