

Draft

**TOWN OF RED HOOK  
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting  
February 13, 2014

Members present: Chairwoman Laurie Husted, Susan Ellis, Sarah Imboden, Mike Zelic, Ross Gould, Dr. Jane Ferguson, Denis Collet (7:14 P.M.)

Absent: Anne Rubin, Karen Schneller-McDonald

Guest: Councilwoman Brenda Cagle

**CALL TO ORDER / QUORUM:** Chairwoman Laurie Husted called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. A quorum was present. Laurie noted that she had no notices of CAC members who would not be able to attend the meeting.

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 8, 2014 MEETING:** Sarah Imboden noted that the approval of the minutes at the January 8, 2014 meeting should have been for the December 11, 2013 meeting. The minutes of the January 8, 2104 meeting as amended were approved with a motion made by Sarah Imboden and seconded by Mike Zelic.

**TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE:** Laurie Husted thanked Ross Gould and CAC members who edited the letter to “The Observer” in support of the proposed Town sidewalk on the East side of Route 9 from Town Hall to Hannaford's Supermarket. Susan Ellis asked if Sarah had sent the final edited letter to the CAC members. Sarah replied that she had, but received no comments. Laurie noted that the letter was printed in the current edition of “The Observer ,” which she had with her. Susan Ellis asked if Laurie wanted the letter sent to any other newspapers, but Laurie replied that this was good local coverage and would suffice for now. Councilwoman Brenda Cagle noted that news was also printed that the Town did not get the TEP Grant for the sidewalk project.

*Denis Collet joined the meeting at 7:14 P.M.*

Laurie Husted continued that the CAC letter in “The Observer” was not the only letter about safety on the highways; there was another letter discussing safety improvements needed on Route 9G. There is a need for shoulders. Laurie noted that she and Brenda Cagle have been told that the NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) has scheduled the work. Denis Collet added that he felt that better lighting is

important to define an area as residential. Pavement with distinct marking for the shoulder is another suggestion. Ross Gould asked if college orientation provides safety training for students. There was further discussion of safety measures and defining the entrance to Bard College with flags and lights. Laurie noted that the section of Route 9G by Bard is defined as a State Road through a rural area, not a college boulevard. She added that Brenda Cagle as Councilwoman would be more able to talk with DOT about the issues. Sarah Imboden asked how speed reduction requests would work. Brenda replied that the Town would send a request to the State Department of Transportation (DOT) for a traffic study, and DOT would tell the Town what it would allow. Laurie asked if Brenda could contact DOT to see what the status is of the follow-up of safety requests.

The other letter to the editor mentioned a need to be able to walk safely through Tivoli Bays, and to develop a direct, secure and well lit pathway from Bard College to Tivoli Village. Brenda Cagle noted that Joel Griffith of the Tivoli Village told her that this trail is one that they would like to facilitate, and it was also discussed at a Trails Committee meeting. There are still concerns about how to ensure the safety of a trail through Tivoli Bays Preserve. Laurie said that lighting might make it safer, but that DEC has been reluctant to agree to it; Ross Gould added that DEC has concerns about the impacts of lighting on the behavior of wildlife.

*Bus Shelter Siting Update:* Laurie Husted reported that there has been discussion of a bus shelter at Church Street Nursery school. She asked if the \$2,500 rebate that the Town received from passing the Unified Solar Permit could be used to site the bus shelter. Brenda Cagle suggested that the money should go back into Planning Board, so that the Town could revise its Energy Star Code. Laurie agreed that would be positive. She continued that the Transportation Subcommittee was going to speak with Church Street about the bus shelter. The Bard shuttle already stops there, and they would ask if the LOOP bus would stop there also.

**WASTE SUBCOMMITTEE:** Laurie Husted reported that the e-waste collection held at the Town Recycling Center on January 18 collected 18,000 pounds of electronics.

*Compost pick-up:* Sarah Imboden reported that she had been in contact with Julian Lesser, who is interested in doing a commercial routes for compost pick-up. Five of his proposed routes are in Ulster County. The sixth is proposed for Rhinebeck and Red Hook. He wanted to know how many stakeholders he could get from both towns. Sarah met with him and the Rhinebeck Conservation Board. Sarah and Laurie also attended a meeting with Economic Development and worked out a spread sheet with a list of contacts from the Chamber of Commerce to help Julian proceed. His proposed fee schedule seemed reasonable. They expected that he would target restaurants, schools

and institutions with large amounts of food waste. It will be a private company, with his own investment capital, so the role of the Town is only to give him the contacts to facilitate his project.

Ross Gould asked if the CAC could give some recognition to the businesses that might participate. Sarah said that they had talked about the Green Business Challenge award idea. Denis Collet felt that the CAC has to separate itself from endorsing this project as the solution for composting. He noted that two years ago Shabazz Jackson had done a presentation with an aerobic digester, which was impressive, but nothing came of it here. Laurie replied that the difference was that Shabazz was asking for waste to be brought to him. Sarah and Laurie are waiting for Julian to get back to them.

**PLANNING BOARD MINUTES REVIEW:** Mike Zelig noted that there had been no meetings since the continuation of the Public Hearing on the Preserve at Lakes Kill on January 6. Laurie said that the Public Hearing continuation would be on the March 3, 2014 Planning Agenda, along with the Anderson Commons proposal. She would be attending and asked if other CAC members would. For the Preserve at Lakes Kill, the Planning Board is only accepting comments from parties who have not spoken before. The CAC is still waiting for reply to the comments that it submitted.

**WATER RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE:** Laurie Husted had received no report on any activity for water resources. Brenda Cagle noted that the SEQR document is complete for the proposed Recreation Park Extension. The Army Corps of Engineers did not respond, and when contacted said that if the Town did not hear from them in a certain number of days, it was a done deal.

**TRAILS COMMITTEE:** Brenda Cagle reported that the Trails Committee is anxious to start work on the Aspinwall Road access and the Town Attorney wants to be sure that their work will not infringe on the wetlands.

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION (DEC) SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS:** Laurie Husted reported that the VFW Post 7765 approved money for the scholarships. The first application for a scholarship has come to the CAC. Ross Gould noted that he heard a radio announcement about the scholarships on WKZE. Laurie has sent e-mails, and the announcement for applications is also on the website.

**RUTH OJA ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP:** Laurie Husted has not heard from Anne Rubin about advertising the scholarship. Sarah Imboden said that she will contact the High School and asked for any information that was sent last year. Sarah asked about press releases, but the Community Foundation maintains a link of all the

scholarships that they manage. Sarah will check if the school website has a list of all the funding sources and how to apply for them. Brenda Cagle suggested contacting the PTSA. Laurie asked Sarah if she would make a list of her contacts for the next year.

**BIODIVERSITY TRAINING COURSE:** Laurie Husted announced that a six month Biodiversity Training course with Hudsonia is offered for local officials and volunteers. Brenda Cagle noted that several Planning Board and CAC members had done one of the early Biodiversity Training exercises, and then a few years ago other CAC and Planning Board members followed up with a more extensive training. Laurie asked if the six month, 3 hours per week 1,100 acre parcel study was done already. Susan Ellis said that the first training which she went to was a pilot project and not that lengthy; the second, which Brenda Cagle did was more involved. The pilot project was a strip along the Sawkill Creek from Oriole Mills Road to the airport on Route 199. Brenda said that her group produced a map of the Northeast corner of Red Hook. CAC members discussed the commitment and did not feel that they could take on a project that required so much time. Laurie said that she had been interested in the program because projects being worked on at Bard College are now required to prepare biodiversity assessments. CAC members suggested that perhaps Hudsonia would work with a group of student interns that would get credit for the report and be required to share the information for the Town to use in its planning reviews.

**DUTCHESS COUNTY CAC'S AND EMC ROUNDTABLE:** Laurie Husted announced that the annual CAC and EMC Roundtable will be held on February 26, 2014 at 7 P.M. at the Farm and Home Center in Millbrook. She thought that it was timely for the CAC, because all the ideas that are shared at the Roundtable might help the CAC to plan how to use the 2014 budget money. Laurie asked what the EMC could do to help the CAC with its goals. Perhaps they could give a notice when it might be a “Big Night” for salamander crossings. Other CAC members suggested training such as for grants and SEQR. Laurie asked if any CAC member wanted to go to the CAC Roundtable to report for Red Hook.

**2014 CAC BUDGET MONEY:** Brenda Cagle reported that she thought that at least \$500 had been approved for the CAC budget. Laurie Husted asked CAC members for project ideas. CAC members discussed the following:

- 1) *Salamander Crossing Project:* Laurie asked if the CAC would participate in the Salamander Crossing Project. She spoke of her experience with the project to help salamanders that are migrating to breeding spots safely cross the roads at night. Some Bard students help with the project, but adult volunteers are needed.
- 2) *More Energy Audits:* Denis Collet suggested that the CAC should partner again with someone who could do energy audits. The CAC should continue to promote

audits and energy efficiency upgrades, and should have a list of available vendors. Sarah Imboden suggested writing an article with 3 people telling their experiences with the audit and upgrade process, noting that if given a list of contacts, a reporter would interview them for the article. Laurie agreed that the CAC should commit to an article.

- 3) *Citizens for Local Power*: Denis Collet asked if there was any word from Susan Gillespie of Citizens for Local Power, if the group was still going. Sarah Imboden said that they are working on the New Capacity Zone proposed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). She attended a big meeting in Rosendale where they had someone from Central Hudson, Public Service Commission (PSC), Boundless Energy (a group involved with the proposal for new power lines) and New York Independent System Operators (NYISO). There was a panel discussion of the power line proposal, which would affect mostly Ulster County, and the New Capacity Zone. Ross Gould asked if the new power line transmission would alleviate the need for a New Capacity Zone. Sarah replied that the New Capacity Zone is already in place, extending from here at the northern end to Westchester County, though Central Hudson had requested a 3 year phase in. What it does is require 80% of the energy purchased in this region to be produced in the region, to force more generation in the zone. There is a bottleneck in the transmission of energy through this zone, and the FERC is pushing the State to do this. The concern is that energy rates will increase whether a new generator is built, or Central Hudson has to pay higher rates for what is available. Denis asked what the CAC wants to do about it. He suggested that it is an opportunity for the CAC to get involved with other grass roots organizations to work for more renewables. If a group of communities would lobby for legislation for virtual solar solutions and municipal solar installations, it would give our efforts more credibility. Sarah and Laurie said that they don't think that Citizens for Local Power is ready to propose establishing a municipal grid, but that the CAC should keep informed and look for an opportunity that the Town might support. Ross Gould suggested a connection to the Climate Action Plan energy goals.
- 4) *Green Business Challenge*: Sarah Imboden really wants the CAC to figure out the "Green Business Challenge." Businesses need to agree to make an effort to implement green business practices and would receive a certificate upon completion. Denis Collet summarized that then the CAC would have a standard by which a business would be graded.
- 5) *Energy Improvement Training*: Denis suggested sponsoring training for cutting costs in "do it yourself" projects for installation of insulation with discussion of choices of materials and techniques.
- 6) *Aquifer Protection Overlay*: Laurie Husted suggested the Overlay as a 6<sup>th</sup> project.

**CAC MEMBER APPOINTMENTS:** Laurie Husted reported that on Tuesday, February 12 the Town Board made appointments to the CAC. Brenda said that Michael, Laurie, Denis and Sarah all were reappointed. Karen wanted to speak with Laurie first, as she had concerns with her scheduling conflicts. CAC members discussed membership expectations and agreed that it was not as important to have perfect attendance as to have a meaningful contribution by attending training courses, writing reports, working on projects or events.

Laurie asked what are the obstacles, resources or information needed to help the CAC achieve its goals for 2014. Sarah said that the CAC could use another member and perhaps Karen would agree to be an ad hoc member that the CAC could call on for expertise on water resource issues, so that she wouldn't feel that she had a conflict with meetings. Sarah would like to find a person who could take the good ideas and expertise that has been brought to the CAC and move forward on a project.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary