

Draft

**TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting
January 14, 2015

Members present: Chairman Laurie Husted, Mike Zelig, Jen Cavanaugh, Denis Collet, Sarah Imboden, Jody Jacobs Absent: Anne Rubin

CALL TO ORDER/ QUORUM: Chairwoman Laurie Husted called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. She noted that Anne Rubin was sick and Town Board liaison Brenda Cagle was away. She announced that Jody Jacobs was appointed to the CAC at the Tuesday Town Board meeting and would get a notification letter.

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 12, 2014 AND DECEMBER 10, 2014 CAC MEETINGS: The minutes were approved with a motion made by Mike Zelig and seconded by Sarah Imboden.

“HUDSON WE SHARE” EVENT AT MARIST COLLEGE: Former CAC member Ross Gould had e-mailed notice of this program given by Partners Restoring the Hudson to discuss the Hudson River Comprehensive Restoration Plan. Laurie Husted attended the presentation this afternoon and gave the following report. It was the 2nd of six public information meetings hosted by the Partners Restoring the Hudson, a group representing about 20 public and private organizations working on Hudson River Estuary issues. Their goal is to achieve more collaboration in their various efforts to access Federal money. They are seeking information from communities along the river about any programs or projects that are being worked on that would impact the Estuary, so that they can be included in the Hudson River Comprehensive Restoration Plan. One of the questions on the current form for New York State funding is “Are you part of a regional plan?” If so your proposal is given more points.

Laurie was asked what larger organizations are part of the group, and replied The Hudson River Estuary Program and Scenic Hudson, among others. Jen Cavanaugh then asked if it is a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) led coalition; Laurie replied yes, though The Nature Conservancy opened and closed the forum. The Partners Restoring the Hudson group has its own website.

Laurie asked the group (PRH) if there would be a way for Red Hook to participate if it is not at the point of having a “shovel ready” project, for example if the PRH group was

organizing plans for waterfront access proposals and Red Hook could opt in. Laurie said the PRH group is looking for proposals that are already in the works, rather than creating projects. She added that she wants to notify the Village of Tivoli of the process, as their waterfront area already has had damage from high storm levels and might qualify for funds. There will be another workshop in March and Laurie would like the CAC brainstorm for potential projects that would qualify for funding. Sarah Imboden thought that Red Hook had already been notified that it would be part of a Hudson River Estuary “pilot program.” Susan Ellis said that might involve work of Hudsonia in Tivoli Bays. Laurie Husted said that she would be seeing Erik Kiviat and would ask him about it. There was further discussion of property ownership and possibilities for projects along the waterfront.

WEB MAPPING RESOURCES FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS AND

VOLUNTEERS SEMINAR: Laurie Husted announced that the Web Mapping seminar would be held on Saturday, January 31 from 8:30 A.M. - 1 P.M. Sarah Imboden and Anne Rubin are interested in attending.

E-WASTE COLLECTION DAY SATURDAY JANUARY 17, 2015: The collection will be held at the Highway Garage area from 8:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. Laurie Husted will try to be there at 8 A.M. to open up, but she will be at a vernal pool event at 9 A.M. Sarah Imboden and Mike Zelig will come early. Jody Jacobs will help until 11 A.M., and Denis Collet will do from 11 A.M. - 1 P.M. Laurie said that 12 Bard college students had also signed up to help. Wait times and congestion were issues at the last E-Waste Day, as recycling and pay-per-bag garbage pick-up occur at the same time. Laurie said that TJ Hackett, Recycling Director, has chosen another location for the e-waste to reduce the congestion.

Jen Cavanaugh and Sarah Imboden noted that there are issues with congestion and unsafe pedestrian and parking patterns during regular recycling days. Sarah suggested that perhaps TJ Hackett would meet with the CAC to discuss traffic pattern options.

SOLARIZE CAMPAIGN IN NEW YORK: Climate Smart Communities under the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) has sent out an invitation to local governments and community partners to participate in Community Solar New York, a new effort to make solar easier and more affordable through a community based initiative. Sustainable Hudson Valley headed by Melissa Everett has been chosen to organize the campaign. Laurie Husted said that a response to signing up for one of the campaigns is due by January 30, 2015; a community may get up to \$5,000 for funds to support outreach, marketing and operations for one of the campaigns. Laurie felt that the opportunity is something that the CAC has been looking for.

Denis Collet said that he would look into the particulars and will get information from some of the companies promoting solar installations. It would be a commitment for which the CAC would have to be able to prioritize time. At the end of the meeting, Denis looked at the requirements of the application, and said that it is a bit too ambitious for the CAC to put together in the next couple of weeks. Red Hook would have to have a plan, a project manager and list partnerships. If Red Hook could partner with another community that is already putting together a proposal, it could be helpful. The Solarize New York Campaign is looking to facilitate bids and contracts with solar installers. Denis felt that the CAC role should be neutral about recommending specific contractors.

Laurie asked Denis if the market penetration for solar installations is happening at the rate that the Energy Subcommittee would desire, without this Solarize Campaign. Denis said that the question would be what percentage would be desirable. He pointed out that an article in the current "Scientific American" magazine discussed the issue of utility companies claiming that extra costs of serving solar power is causing regular customers to pay higher rates for their electric distribution. Denis felt that it is important for the CAC to be educated on what the various arguments are between utility costs and solar savings. He is a proponent of figuring out a way to promote community solar projects and solar farms. For whatever project the Energy Subcommittee would propose for funding, there would have to be a plan, a project manager and a structure in place to qualify, which is not set up for the Town at this time. Denis and Jody Jacobs discussed their experience and savings with solar, geothermal and heat pump energy sources.

2015 CAC BUDGET: Laurie Husted announced that the CAC has a \$500 budget for for projects and education.

BARD COLLEGE SAWKILL CREEK MONITORING PROJECT: Mike Zelic asked whether or not the CAC 2014 budget funded sample tests. Laurie replied that the invoice had been submitted and the sampling had been done, though she was not able to join the student samplers. The CAC should get the results of the testing.

Jen Cavanaugh reported that she has been in contact with Professor Dueker and sent a lot of information to him. They are planning to meet, but haven't set a time.

Laurie Husted thanked Susan Ellis for finding all of her records for the CAC Sawkill Creek Water Monitoring project done from 1976 - 1982. Monthly sampling included sites for length of the Sawkill Creek, including tributary points, taken by the CAC and Red Hook Rod and Gun Club. They were tested for multiple parameters, analyzed and reported on by CAC member and Bard College Professor of Chemistry Michael Rosenthal. Laurie said that Professor Dueker was very pleased to have so much data background for his monitoring team to work with.

PLANNING BOARD REVIEWS: Mike Zelig reported that the Hoffman Residential Subdivision is waiting for a pump test for the Village of Red Hook water supply to determine if the well capacity is adequate to serve the subdivision. They also continue to discuss the issue of the number of cottages for affordable housing.

Preserve at Lakes Kill: Mike reported that the Preserve at Lakes Kill received Preliminary Subdivision Approval from the Planning Board. Proposed road improvements and a recommended reduction of the speed limit to 25 miles per hour satisfied the site distance requirements for the entrance to the subdivision. A well permit sought by a neighbor was revoked, as the proposed community septic system of the subdivision would have been too close to it.

Greig Farm Inn and Restaurant proposal : Mike reported that Norman Greig presented variances from the Zoning Board of Appeals for his proposal for an inn and restaurant in the barn behind the Grandiflora building. The first variance was for a regulation that an inn must have direct access to a State Highway. The second variance was for the number of seats allowed in the restaurant. He had applied for 80 and the ZBA granted 50. Sarah Imboden added that the other variance needed was that there could not be two special use permits for the parcel of property.

Shipping Containers : Laurie Husted reported that she was given a project for Bard to apply for approval to make digital rooms out of old shipping containers to increase space for the Media Center. Planning reminded them that the proposal would require a 200' setback from Annandale Road, as it is a designated scenic road. Laurie said that they will present a visual rendering, as they are planning a “green roof” with plantings.

HANDOUTS FOR NEW HOMEOWNERS IN RED HOOK: Jen Cavanaugh passed around a pamphlet for homeowners produced by the Town of Clinton CAC. She noted that it did take a lot of time and cost a fair amount for printing. She thought that if the CAC felt that it would be useful, many of the same suggestions for septic maintenance and water supply protection, and other tips, would apply in Red Hook. She will find out how many were used in Clinton. CAC members discussed working with the Red Hook Library, Chamber of Commerce or other local groups to produce and distribute such a handout. Laurie Husted suggested that if a group such as the library would undertake the project, the CAC could contribute to it. Sarah Imboden suggested to begin with one of the separate subjects such as septic maintenance or water supply protection and to produce flyers that could be posted on refrigerators. Discussion will be continued.

LINDEN AVENUE BRIDGE CLOSING: Mike Zelig asked Laurie Husted about the bridge closing; Laurie said that they both attended a meeting about the bridge closing

because it was one of the sites to be considered for the Sawkill Creek Water Monitoring.

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Laurie asked Mike to report on the proposed project and potential tree removal. Mike said that the bridge had been declared unsound and engineering evaluations had come to the conclusion that the only recourse is to remove the bridge and construct a new one. That means that there will be no vehicle or pedestrian crossing at the site for 6 – 8 months (April - November). The County has proposed to partner with the Town to provide a vehicle and gas for transport from Mill Road School to the Recreational Park if the Town can provide drivers. Laurie added that the good news about a new bridge is that it will accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians by including a sidewalk and a shoulder on one side. Mike noted that there will need to be some tree removal to allow for equipment to maneuver the footings for the construction and that the County will be following DEC stream bank stabilization guidelines.

PILGRIM PIPELINE PROJECT: Laurie Husted noted that it was not on the Tuesday Town Board agenda, but will be discussed at the January 28, 2015 meeting. Jess Scott from Citizens for Local Power will present a resolution opposing the pipeline project. It would be good for CAC members to attend.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP UPDATES:

Ruth Oja Environmental Scholarship: Jen Cavanaugh reported that she spoke with Ruth, the High School and the Community Foundation about the applications, so they are ready to go out.

DEC Environmental Camp Scholarships: Jen Cavanaugh said that she is waiting for a reply from the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). She spoke with Commander Bill Moore about the funding for the scholarships, which the VFW has generously sponsored for over 20 years. Commander Moore said that he would bring it up at their meeting on January 12 and let her know the results. It is possible that the weather caused the meeting to be cancelled.

“TAPPED” FILM AT BARD COLLEGE: Laurie Husted announced that there will be a screening of the film “Tapped” at Bard on Thursday, February 5, 2015. There will be a water tasting test prior to the film.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,
Susan H. Ellis, Secretary

