

Draft

**TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting
August 9, 2017

Members present: Chairwoman Laurie Husted, Julia Solomon, Denis Collet, Mike Zelig, Lori Urbin, Susan Ellis

Absent: Jen Cavanaugh

Guests: Supervisor Robert McKeon (7:20 P.M.),
Councilwoman Sarah Imboden (7:47 P.M.)

CALL TO ORDER / QUORUM : Chairwoman Laurie Husted called the meeting to order at 7:07 P.M. A quorum was present.

PROPOSAL TO PROMOTE REDUCTION OF THE USE OF POLYSTYRENE IN LOCAL BUSINESSES: Lori Urbin has spoken with the CAC in the past, asking for ideas and interest among the members to approach local businesses to encourage ways to replace polystyrene cups and take-out containers (a category distinct from the styrofoam used in shipping and insulation) with more environmentally friendly products. She brought a draft letter for CAC members to discuss as an outreach project. Lori is interested in taking the lead on the project and willing to be the “outreach coordinator.”

The letter offers to have a CAC representative meet with any interested business owner to discuss their needs, and research availability and costs of products as a free service. A goal would be to develop a reference of products and providers with a comparison of costs for easy access. CAC members suggested that Lori seek information on local businesses and what they might carry and provide from the Red Hook Chamber of Commerce.

Mike Zelig commented that he liked the positive tone of the letter as an offer of opportunity rather than a restriction. Denis Collet said that he has been reading different opinions about the carbon footprint of styrofoam and plastics versus paper, claiming that the carbon footprint of styrofoam and plastics is less than that of paper products. Susan Ellis added that there is a need to have research that shows accurate evaluations of the complete environmental impact of producing, handling and recycling or disposal of the various product options. Lori concluded that she needs to do some more research on the issues to present to the CAC before approaching businesses.

Supervisor Robert McKeon joined the meeting.

Lori Urbin asked CAC members to consider what recognition for local businesses that respond to the proposed program would be an incentive. Susan Ellis said that showing a business how they can participate in a way that would make their business work better for no or minimal cost increase might be the best. Lori agreed that the biggest part of accepting a change is often the economics. Lori will meet with Kim McGrath at the Chamber of Commerce for a list of businesses to start with and will report back at the next CAC meeting. Susan Ellis added a suggestion that if Lori wants a focus that is not overwhelming, she might speak with the Village Merchants Committee. Its membership is focused on village retail merchants, whereas the Chamber has lawyers, bankers, contractors, communications, service businesses and more.

ENERGIZE RED HOOK: Laurie Husted reported on summer outreach for the Energize program. On the “Friday Night lights” they got names of 6 leads, and 4 leads at Tivoli Day. They are still planning a Hardscrabble Day table, but would like the Municipal leaders to endorse Energize and carry a banner of support in the parade. Plans will be confirmed at the September CAC meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED MORATORIUM ON EXTRACTION OF WATER AND SOIL RESOURCES AND TIMBER HARVESTING: Supervisor Robert McKeon spoke to the CAC about the public hearing scheduled for the Wednesday, August 23, 2017 Town Board meeting. For public discussion is a proposal to enact a 12 month moratorium on beginning or adding to operations commercially extracting water or soil resources, or tree harvesting by clear cutting, for such time (up to a year) as it would take to enact some reasonable limitations on such activities.

Supervisor McKeon noted that there are very few limitations on such activities in the Town Code currently. For example, on parcels of more than 5 acres in the RD3 district there are no limitations to the amount of water that can be withdrawn from the property. There is no Town Code requirement that a property resource be able to recharge at a certain level. If the water source is capable of producing more than 100,000 gallons per day a DEC permit is required. Any new or expanded use of water resources will be impacted by the moratorium. There is one water collection operation that seeks to receive a lot line adjustment to combine a 3.6 acre and 1.7 acre parcel and a special permit to collect spring water on a parcel in the RD3 District. He is also applying to DEC for a Water Withdrawal Permit. Lori Urbin asked how the moratorium would affect the current water collection activities. Supervisor McKeon explained that they could continue operating at their present level, but need to provide the proper information on the number of trucks and gallons collected, a discussion that he has had with the owner.

For soil mining, Supervisor McKeon said that the Town Code requires a special permit if an operation is going to extract, sell and distribute off-site more than 1,000 tons of soil per year. That would mean 80 of the large trucks for each parcel allowed to conduct soil mining without a permit. Many other towns have a threshold of 1,000 cubic yards. The Town should have the protection of having those resources available for local needs

Councilwoman Sarah Imboden joined the meeting.

Julia Solomon asked Supervisor McKeon to address the timber harvesting issue. He replied that the reference in the draft of the Local Law proposing the moratorium applies to commercial logging but exempts Timber Management conducted in accordance with a plan approved by NYS DEC.

Supervisor McKeon summed up the need for the Town Moratorium to give the Town time to understand the impact of those activities related to essential resources of the community, and to be prepared for more pressure to engage in those activities. The CAC is already working with the Saw Kill Watershed Community to develop recommendations for protecting the Saw Kill watershed as a sole source of drinking water for Bard College and many other residents. Supervisor McKeon requested the CAC's support and work on the recommendations for updating the Town Code. Councilwoman Sarah Imboden added that she wants to see who comes to the Public Hearing and hear what they say, as that is what a public hearing is for.

Supervisor McKeon left the meeting.

Councilwoman Sarah Imboden continued that the Town Board is proposing authorization for the CAC to develop recommendations for the changes to the Town Code that will address the protection of the three important resources covered in the Moratorium proposal. CAC members thought that current membership of the CAC was not sufficient to complete the work in a timely manner. Denis Collet said that while the CAC would certainly review the issues, a Task Force structure including a CAC representative and Town officials from the various departments that would make decisions based on the proposals would be more efficient.

TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE: Laurie Husted reported that bicycle / pedestrian counts are scheduled for Tuesday September 12, Wednesday September 13 and Thursday September 14 (all 4-6 P.M.) plus Saturday September 9 from 12 P.M. - 2 P.M. She needs volunteers to sign up for slots of at least 1 hour.

SAW KILL WATERSHED COMMUNITY (SKWC) WATER SAMPLING: Laurie Husted announced that the next water sample collection will be on Friday, August 11, 2017 at 10:30 A.M.

ENERGY SUBCOMMITTEE:

Town Hall Upgrade : Denis Collet reported that the Town is still waiting for the final authorization of insulation of the Town buildings and the heating unit replacement for the Town Hall Upgrade. Three bids are needed for the heating contract, and two are in.

Streetlight Conversion: Denis Collet announced that for the Streetlight Conversion project, the Town will be the lead committee. There will be a meeting at the Town Hall with 10 other communities that are ready to go forward with the Mid-Hudson Streetlight Consortium.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, September 13, 2017 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary