

**TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting
February 8, 2006

Members present: Chairwoman Ruth Oja, Brenda Cagle, Laurie Husted, Mary Ann Johnson, Susan Ellis

Guests: Denise Barton, Environmental Engineer and Robert McKeon, Agriculture and Open Space Advisory Committee Chairman

Chairwoman Ruth Oja called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M. The minutes of the January meeting were approved with a motion made by Laurie Husted and seconded by Brenda Cagle.

ANDERSON COMMONS PROPOSAL: Chairwoman Ruth Oja presented for CAC discussion a draft of comments for the Anderson Commons proposal. The Trails Committee has already recommended that the Planning Board not accept a parcel proposed as a Town trail area in lieu of recreation fees. The parcel does not serve an adequate purpose in the Town's trail plan. They have recommended that the parcel should be appropriately maintained as open space by a neighborhood association for the development. CAC members agreed.

Treatment of the sewage system is a concern. The property lies over the aquifer that provides Village water. Ruth has suggested consideration of a reed bed sewage filtering system. Susan Ellis asked if there is any plan for future extension of the sewage system; CAC members agreed that any system for the development should be designed to allow for future expansion. The Village is lead agency in the planning process for the proposal, and CAC members thought that there should be special concern about the proximity to the Village wells. The CAC discussed aquifer protection laws which would add extra protection, but don't preclude development.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS: The CAC was very pleased to have 8 applications for the two spaces at DEC summer camp. CAC members chose Emily Munger and Dalton Thompson as recipients of a scholarship for one week at Camp DeBruce. Susan Ellis will send letters to the campers and press releases. Chairwoman Ruth Oja will notify DEC and see if the Gazette Advertiser will do an article with former campers.

SCENIC ROADS: Mary Ann Johnson reported that the Planning Board is very interested in having information and recommendations on scenic roads. Mary Ann contacted Becky Thornton of Dutchess Land Conservancy, and asked for information from the Towns of Washington and Stanford. She received a reply from the Town of Stanford, which has a Scenic Roads Ordinance with set criteria and performance standards. She asked CAC members to review the information and look at Town roads to

discuss at a meeting on Wednesday February 22. This date is being changed due to conflict with the Environmental Management Council CAC roundtable meeting.)

TIMBER HARVESTING: Mary Ann Johnson reported that the Town of Amenia is trying to streamline timber harvesting regulations. In the Town of Pawling, applications must go before the Planning Board. If 1 –5 acres will be cut, erosion control measures are needed. If 5 or more acres will be cut, a stormwater and pollution prevention plan is needed. Mary Ann noted that current zoning in Red Hook only addresses timber harvesting in the waterfront district and limited development district.

AGRICULTURE AND OPEN SPACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE PROPOSAL: Ag and Open Space Committee Chairman Robert McKeon attended to discuss an upcoming proposal of the committee. Robert noted that applications for the Conservation Easement Tax Abatement program are due by March 1, 2006. He also reported that the Town Board would be voting on a resolution supporting a statewide effort to establish a real estate transfer tax (2% of sale price over the median sale price for the county) to fund purchase of development rights (PDR). Of this fund, 10% could be used for stewardship, i.e. Winnakee Land Trust

Robert reported that the County legislature is investigation Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), and will hold a forum to explore the appropriateness for Towns or the County. The Ag and Open Space Advisory Committee began looking at TDR in 2004. The County will choose 3 towns as pilots, and Red Hook may be one. To prepare for work on TDR, the Committee has drawn an Agricultural Reserve District map to identify critical remaining agricultural lands. The Committee is recommending a one year moratorium on subdivision of parcels more that 10 acres within the district until rezoning and TDR can be reviewed and implemented. The CAC thanked Robert for his presentation and will discuss further the recommendation.

TREES: Brenda Cagle reported that she gave Supervisor Marirose Blum Bump a copy of the village resolution and a draft for the Town Board to apply to become a “Tree City.” The Town would need to designate an official tree committee as the first step. Brenda thinks that having a comprehensive forestry management plan would be advisable. Brenda has contacted NEMO for guidelines on tree protection and will ask Pace Land Use Institute.

ENERGY AUDIT: Laurie Husted reported that she gave the energy audit results to the Town Board. She suggested that the CAC work on energy saving recommendations for the proposed highway garage.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, March 8, 2006 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary