

DRAFT
TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting
May 10, 2006

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

Guest: Ginger Hagen of Dutchess Land Conservancy

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

TREES: Chairwoman Brenda Cagle reported that CAC members Ruth Oja and Denise Barton handed out tree seedlings for an Arbor Day project that helps to fulfill requirements for designation as a “Tree City USA.”

Brenda has spoken with Highway Superintendent Wayne Hildenbrand about planting trees on Town property and along Town highways. Wayne has agreed to supply workers to dig holes and help with watering. The CAC discussed beginning a small tree planting program with a few trees on the south side of the Town Hall; the trees should show an energy saving, and add aesthetic appeal.

TIMBER HARVESTING REGULATIONS: Mary Ann Johnson reported that Planning consultant Michele Greig has presented a proposal to the Planning Board for timber harvesting regulations, which the Board will be discussing. CAC members asked questions about the source and scope of the proposed regulations. Mary Ann Johnson provided copies and suggested that CAC members e-mail comments to the Planning Board.

CONSERVATION EASEMENT PARCELS: Chairwoman Brenda Cagle reported that Assessor Frank Orlando has presented his estimated of the values of the easements. He considers two of the proposed easements to be not developable, and therefore of no value. CAC members believe that both parcels, though one might require a bridge, have potential to be developed. The CAC may ask for engineering advice and will discuss the issue with the Assessor.

MEETING NIGHT: Rich Schiafo is unable to attend meetings on Wednesday nights. CAC members are considering Thursday, but Mary Ann Johnson has a conflict for a few more months. The CAC will look at changing the date then.

PROPOSED MORATORIUM: The public hearing scheduled for Monday had to be rescheduled due to complaints of improper notice of change of location. At the session, which continued for information only, it was explained that minor subdivisions with sketch approval, and major subdivisions with preliminary approval could proceed during a moratorium. Residents expressed opinions both for and against the moratorium. The CAC discussed reasons for supporting the moratorium, and will attend the next public hearing to express support.

AQUIFER PROTECTION CONCERNS: Drayton Grant has sent a letter to the Town Board, Planning Board, Water Board and Village Board outlining concerns about how all the new development is affecting the aquifer underlying the Village. CAC members discussed the need to have an objective engineer evaluate the situation. Pleasant Valley has contracted with Chazen Engineering to study the

effects of density of population and septic systems on the aquifers. Chazen is also updating the Gerber Report for the County evaluating septic waste disposal systems and options.

Rich Schiafo has expressed opinions about a sewer feasibility study. The CAC will ask that he continue research and provide information and alternatives.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM ON JORDAN COVE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

PROJECT: Laurie Husted and Susan Ellis attended the Environmental Management Council (now Cornell Cooperative Extension Environmental Program) program. They reported that the Jordan Cove (Connecticut) Watershed Management Project was a development designed to evaluate and compare the effects of traditional development with best management practices. The best management practices included clustering, use of pavers instead of asphalt, rain gardens, swales and other retention areas to reduce runoff, and encouragement of low or no mow areas instead of lawns. Results of monitoring showed that stormwater runoff, as well as export of pollutants could be reduced. The project did find that there was some resistance by residents to reducing size of mowed lawns, and that residents continued to use wetland areas for disposal of brush and yard wastes. Hopefully, education will change some of those practices.

Susan Ellis noted that the Executive Committee of the Environmental Management Council has resigned since the EMC has been made an Environmental Program Committee of Cornell Cooperative Extension.

NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN BOARD: The CAC will have a bulletin board in the Town Hall and hopes to post public information on environmental practices, perhaps starting with landscaping tips. The CAC will try to change it frequently.

SCENIC ROADS: Mary Ann Johnson is finalizing the map. She will put it in pdf file and send it out. If the Planning Board decides to incorporate it into zoning, it will require a map change, text change and a new law for the environmental protection overlay section
CAC members discussed protection of scenic views. It would only be through protection of scenic roads. CAC members agreed that applicants should be required to add items that are considered scenic, such as stone walls, as determined by a site visit of the Planning Board.

RECYCLING CENTER: Susan Ellis reported that she had been given a letter by a resident who witnessed the situation at the Recycling Center which resulted in the firing of Recycling Monitor Bobbi Armstrong. The CAC decided that it was appropriate that the resident direct the letter to the Town Board, as they make decisions about personnel.

Denise Barton reported that Cornell Cooperative Extension Environmental Program for May 24 would be on bio fuels. She also noted that there is a recycling display at the Red Hook library and a butterfly garden is being planted at school.

Chairwoman Brenda Cagle noted that there will be a meeting of all Committee chairs on May 16.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, June 14, 2006 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary