

**TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting
September 13, 2006

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

Guests: Rick Derikart, guest speaker and Rohan Parikh, intern with Councilwoman Jean Bordewich

Brenda Cagle called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. Brenda noted as amendments to the August 2006 minutes that for the Photovoltaic Demonstration Project, Laurie Husted had asked if Brenda would set up the education and outreach section for the grant. Brenda also noted that under the Intermunicipal Task Force, the discussion included Transfer of Development Rights. Mary Ann Johnson added that she volunteered to help with the school involvement for the Photovoltaic grant. The minutes of the August meeting as amended were approved with a motion made by Ruth Oja and seconded by Denise Barton.

Brenda reported that Ginger Hagan has been officially appointed to the CAC. Both Jim Rapoli and Rich Schiafo have resigned. Secretary Susan Ellis will send letters thanking them for their service. The CAC will seek a new member to replace Rich; Denise Barton will write a notice for the CAC bulletin board.

TREES: Brenda Cagle has asked for help with tree plantings. Since Ginger Hagan has had experience planting for the NYC Parks Department, she agreed to help. The CAC discussed sites for tree planting on South Broadway and Echo Valley Road. Brenda noted that Car Quest recently had Central Hudson remove 4 honey locusts in front of their property. Central Hudson discourages plantings in the Right-of-Way, in case underground utilities would be planned for the future. Mary Ann Johnson is speaking with the Triebel family for permission to plant trees in front of their property.

SCENIC ROADS: Mary Ann Johnson spoke with Planning Board Chairwoman Christine Kane about scenic roads. The issue has been tabled for the summer, and Planning Board members wish to drive some of the roads. The CAC discussed who should present a scenic roads proposal; Mary Ann suggested that it should be a joint effort of the Planning Board and the CAC.

BULLETIN BOARD: Denise Barton reported that she needs recycling information and more items to post. She suggested a notice of how many acres of land are under conservation easement.

GREEN BUILDING: Rohan Parikh spoke about “green building.” Councilwoman Jean Bordewich, Rohan and Laurie Husted believe that the Town Board can require that all new building be Energy Star compliant. The CAC discussed whether or not it would be difficult to enact, but Mary Ann Johnson suggested that many builders are supportive. Planning consultant Michele Greig, Deputy Supervisor Bill O’Neill and the Intermunicipal Task Force support proceeding with the concept. Ginger Hagan noted that Common Fire has invited the CAC to an open house on October 15, 2006 to show their new “platinum green” building. Common Fire is a cooperative house owned by a non-profit organization.

The CAC discussed hiring a consultant to review energy saving programs and do a green building feasibility study. Rohan Parikh suggested contacting Nikki Coddington of Greenburg in Westchester to see how it works for them; he will contact Nikki. Mary Ann Johnson added that she thought that green building should be an attainable standard..

ENERGY CONSERVATION RE: THE PHOTOVOLTAIC DEMONSTRATION GRANT: CAC members discussed what reasonable measures the CAC could consider funding from its budget. Laurie Husted thought that about \$400 would cover some of the lighting improvements, such as occupancy sensors (which have rebates). Laurie will check with Bookkeeper Debbie Marks and Purchasing Agent Ted Kudzy. The CAC also planned to reserve \$200 to fund speaker Simon Gruber for a talk on water management with the Intermunicipal Task Force.

SPEAKER RICK DERIKART ON ENERGY STAR PROGRAMS: Rick Derikart works for Conservation Services Groups, which has been contracted by New York Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) to implement the Small Homeowners Program. Rick discussed the Energy Star Programs, a federal EPA program, which is modified to the needs of the state. He noted that a large concern is not just achieving energy savings, but making a home safe. A builder signs up with the EPA and New York State and agrees to follow the requirements for energy star building.

Rick explained the Home Energy Rating System (HERS). HERS is a federal program; every energy star home must be evaluated by a HERS rater after it is finished, which may cost up to \$1000 in Dutchess County. If the home does not receive a score higher than 84, it does not qualify as an energy star house. New York State offers an incentive that it will pay \$750 - \$1250, depending on the rating, for a house that passes. Rick explained the rating system and noted that there is computer modeling where the building design is compared to energy codes, ventilation standards and ductwork standards, or performance method where the home is tested and rated. The program allows for trade-offs, whereby a higher score for one area of saving might compensate for a lower score in another area. The CAC asked Rick how many houses had been rated in the area, and he noted that last year he had done about 600 houses in the mid-Hudson to Albany area.

The CAC asked how the program could apply to affordable housing. Rick said that it is a good fit for affordable housing, and there is additional incentive for families below 80% of average income. The CAC asked how modular construction compares for energy star compliance. Rick noted that there is separate certification for modular building, but the main difference is in how the modules are assembled.

The CAC discussed reasons to convince builders and Town officials to proceed with energy star requirements. Rick noted that NYSERDA offers 25% rebate on marketing costs. He added that the web site www.energysmart.org lists builders who are energy star qualified. Rick has a listing from which he can tell if houses were built to standard. He encouraged the Town to require a HERS rater certificate.

Rick noted that green building is not the same as energy star building, but includes water conservation and resource conservation. A gold standard energy star home uses 50% less energy than the standard. The EPA requires a thermal energy bypass checklist, which addresses the 14 most common areas of energy loss.

The CAC thanked Rick for his presentation. It was extensive and informative.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, October 11, 2006 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary