

**TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting
August 8, 2007

Members present: Chairwoman Brenda Cagle, Susan Ellis, Denise Barton, Mary Ann Johnson, Owen O'Connor

Guests: Councilwoman Lisa Pullaro, Patrick Kelly

Chairwoman Brenda Cagle called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M. The minutes of the June meeting were approved with a motion made by Brenda Cagle and seconded by Susan Ellis. Brenda announced that Sustainable Hudson Valley is holding a conference at Norrie Point on Friday, August 24, 2007. She asked Councilwoman Lisa Pullaro if any Town Board members could attend. Lisa will e-mail the information to Town Board members. Denise Barton noted that ICLEI Regional Representative Kim Lundgren would be attending.

ICLEI: Denise Barton reported that she has been in contact with ICLEI and is waiting for approval of a password from ICLEI in order to be able to use the Clean Air/ Climate Protection software that has been sent to the CAC.

SEWER FEASIBILITY DISCUSSION: Brenda announced that on Thursday, August 9, 2007, there would be a meeting of the Town Board, Intermunicipal Task Force and C.T. Male Associates to discuss options for sewer facilities. Legislator Kirsten Gillibrand will send a representative to discuss grant opportunities.

Brenda noted that the sewer discharge options would be to the Sawkill Creek, to the Hudson River, or subsurface. Discharge to the Sawkill Creek would require tertiary treatment. Subsurface discharge could be done with secondary treatment and constructed wetlands, but would require a 12 acre site. Perhaps the Town could partner with Bard College. If discharged to the Hudson, the effluent would require a long transport, and Brenda questioned what affect it would have on the aquifer if the projected 350,000 – 500,000 gallons per day were removed and discharged to the River. Brenda noted that Russell Urban Mead 's report on the Town's aquifers indicated that there was sufficient capacity and it wouldn't necessarily be best to return the effluent to the aquifer. Mary Ann Johnson noted that the aquifer is at more risk if nothing is done.

Brenda Cagle reported that Simon Gruber (from Orange County) has asked the Town Board for permission to send the C. T. Male report to another engineer for review. CAC members agreed to recommend that the Town Board give that permission. The CAC discussed other recommendations for the meeting and agreed to support a sewer project and ask for additional review of alternative technologies.

ENERGY STAR PRESENTATION AT TOWN BOARD MEETING AUGUST 14, 2007: Brenda Cagle reported that HERS rater/Energy Star builder Jack Christmann has confirmed that he will speak at the Town Board meeting on August 14, but she has had no answer from Steve Cornacchini.

The CAC discussed the points that they would like Jack to cover in his talk, such as the costs and benefits of Energy Star building. Mary Ann Johnson noted that properly constructed homes meet Energy Star requirements. Councilwoman Lisa Pullaro asked that incentives for remodels and add-ons be addressed. Brenda Cagle will ask for discussion of what other communities have done.

The CAC discussed whether or not Energy Star standards were included in the Intermunicipal Task Force Traditional Community Development plan. Lisa noted that it was not in the document presented to the Town Board for consideration. Mary Ann Johnson said the requirement should be town wide; Susan Ellis felt that if it were not included in the Task Force plan, at least the Task Force should support town wide requirement.

CAC members discussed support of the Centers and Greenspaces Plan. Mary Ann Johnson made a motion which was seconded by Denise Barton and passed unanimously to send a letter of support for the Centers and Greenspaces plan, including establishment of sewer facilities and protection of the aquifer.

REGIONAL WATERSHED GROUP: Susan Ellis reported that she has spoken with Sheila Buff of the Milan CAC, who has proposed forming a watershed group to develop intermunicipal strategies to protect the small watersheds of Northern Dutchess, for which the headwaters begin in Milan. Susan commended Sheila and Milan for having the foresight to be willing to undertake a project that will mainly benefit the downstream communities. Susan and Sheila discussed identifying stakeholders who might work with the group and planning an initial meeting in September. Brenda Cagle has already mentioned the idea to Meg Crawford of Rhinebeck CAC. Mary Ann Johnson noted that Milan has recently passed a Wetlands Law.

Denise Barton reported that she has noticed some filling of the pond in the village behind the Red Hook Inn and asked if any regulations affected it. CAC members discussed whether or not an effort could be made to have all the neighboring owners work together to make the pond more aesthetically pleasing and recreational.

TREE PLANTING: Brenda Cagle reported that Nancy Guski is prepared to help. Brenda, Councilwoman Sue Crane and a Department of Transportation (DOT) landscape architect walked Route 9 and identified locations to plant trees. The Town will receive 30 – 40 trees to plant in the Spring.

Mary Ann Johnson asked the status of the proposed Tree Ordinance; Brenda replied that there is still work needed with Town Attorney Chris Chale. Mary Ann urged that it be completed and spoke of a program in Blacksburg, VA. Blacksburg has a municipal nursery, and when a tree is removed, two are planted. The cost of 100 trees is about \$2,000. Mary Ann suggested that it would be a good project for the Tree Commission. She also suggested planting along Route 199 West by the ball field.

The Department of Environmental Conservation is offering \$1,000 grant for a “quick start” program for organizations with no tree management plan. Brenda suggested planting trees and shrubs at St. Margaret’s Home. Mary Ann Johnson suggested using the grant to get a Tree Commission started.

SCENIC ROADS: Brenda Cagle reported that the Scenic Roads ordinance has been referred to the Zoning Review Committee by the Planning Board.

SOLAR PANELING: Denise Barton reported that School Superintendent Paul Finch would like to use solar paneling at the schools, but is looking at feasibility. Denise learned that net metering for electric is not available for commercial buildings. Mary Ann Johnson suggested that the Northern Dutchess Alliance needs a topic for September and she would pursue a presentation on solar energy for the Towns, Villages and Schools.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS: Mary Ann Johnson reported that the Northern Dutchess Alliance discussed easements with land trusts, and the land trusts feel that Towns have different enforcement options, which would give them more control over small easements. Milan has a fee structure of \$200 per acre for land easements and \$200 per acre for building sites. Mary Ann noted that the County might be willing to fund a position for an Intermunicipal Land Trust.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, September 12, 2007 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary