

**TOWN OF RED HOOK
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting
August 13, 2008

Members present: Chairwoman Brenda Cagle, Susan Ellis, Denise Barton, Dr. Jane Ferguson; Laurie Husted, Zoie Riel

Guest: Councilwoman Micki Strawinski, Milan activist Sheila Buff

Chairwoman Brenda Cagle called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M. The minutes of the July meeting were approved with a motion made by Dr. Jane Ferguson and seconded by Denise Barton.

RECYCLING: Zoie Riel reported that the County has passed a resolution to include recycling of plastics #3, #5 and #7. Zoie noted a negative aspect of the decision in that many plastics, including #1 and #2 from Dutchess County, are being shipped to China, where they are burned and not recycled. China is currently paying the highest market price and has very few environmental controls. Zoie added that the plastics produce high BTU's and very little residue; the Dutchess County Resource Recovery Agency burn plant has scrubbers and environmental controls for emissions. Therefore, Zoie suggested that the County's recycling resources should be kept as local as possible. CAC members will research the subject before the next meeting, so that it can make an informed recommendation.

Zoie Riel asked if anyone had reviewed the contract with Royal Carting. Councilwoman Micki Strawinski said that the Town Board has not as yet, but that the contract was due to be renewed. Zoie also was asked about planning a fall recycling event. She is in favor and asked Micki what her thoughts are. Micki said that she is getting mixed reactions, but would work on a plan with Zoie.

Laurie Husted informed the CAC that some landfills are capturing methane.

STREAM ALLIANCE OF NORTHERN DUTCHESS (SAND): Brenda Cagle introduced Sheila Buff, environmental activist from Milan, who came to speak to the CAC about forming a stream alliance (SAND) to act as a watch dog and advocate for watershed resources. She suggested that the alliance include the Stony Creek, Sawkill, Mudderkill, Landsmankill and part of the Crum Elbow watersheds, which represent the remaining tributaries of the Hudson River in Dutchess County that are not watched over by a watershed group.

Sheila noted that one of the issues would be to form a group that would not be subject to political changes. There should be representatives from the Towns of Red Hook, Milan, Rhinebeck, Hyde Park, and Germantown if it would be willing to join with Dutchess County.

Sheila reported that she attended a meeting of the Hudson River Watershed Alliance in Beacon, which included NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Clearwater. She noted that there was discussion of grant money for studies to determine water quality, and projects such as stream clean-ups and sampling. Sheila thought that perhaps the new group could be associated with Scenic Hudson as a parent group.

Sheila suggested that a beginning project could be to take cameras and photograph all along the watersheds. Property owners would need to be asked permission, and Sheila noted that property owners with streams need education about proper stream maintenance. She asked if the CAC could do a program at Hardscrabble Day. The CAC will need detailed maps with the watersheds and lot lines to do the photos. Susan Ellis noted that the aerial photographs produced by Dutchess County Planning are excellent guides for field work, and should be available at Town Hall. If the most recent are not available, the CAC should consider purchasing them. CAC members discussed setting a goal of an October schedule. Denise Barton will ask Mary Pat Budd if the “Who Cares Club” at the middle school would be interested in the photography project.

ICLEI (Climate Control): Denise Barton reported that the ICLEI software for evaluating carbon emissions has been downloaded to the Town Hall. Zoie Riel noted that she still would like to pursue getting Bard student interns to help with survey data collection and input. Rohan Parikh has returned to college and Denise noted that the date for the “webinar” that he was planning to follow was changed.

HIGHWAY GARAGE PROPOSAL: Councilwoman Micki Strawinski reported that the Town Board directed Morris Associates to draft site plan sketches for the proposed new Highway Garage on Town Hall property. Morris Associated presented two alternatives, which the Town Board voted to send to Dutchess County Planning for review. Micki would prefer consideration of the site adjoining the Department of Transportation depot to facilitate potential shared services, such as the salt shed.

Brenda Cagle met with Highway Superintendent Wayne Hildenbrand and toured the current Highway Garage. The County has no oversight of the facility, but the DEC does. Wayne noted that they are using citrus based environmentally friendly cleaners. Fuel issues are addressed according to DEC standards. Brenda has also asked for information from the Town of Clinton, which built its garage in 2004. The CAC reviewed information on what the Town of Woodstock has done for their Highway Garage, which is located on their Sawkill River. They have located fuel storage and salt storage offsite and have used geothermal and photovoltaic energy sources.

Brenda reported that she spoke with Jeremy Rosenthal of DEC about the requirements for SEQR in review of proposed highway garage sites. He said that the Town can act as Lead Agency and referred Brenda to “The SEQR Cookbook” as a guide. He noted that the SEQR process should begin as early as possible. Brenda also reported opinions from Anne Rubin, who said that a Senior Hydrogeologist from the County states that no one should put a highway garage over an aquifer, and from Mary Ann Johnson, who believes that a full environmental review should be required, as costs of mitigation for any pollution are high.

CAC members discussed the various issues of siting the Highway Garage, and agreed to recommend that if the garage is built at the Town Hall property, fuel storage should be moved offsite and a shared salt shed should be located offsite, noting that shares services would increase truck traffic.

AQUIFER ORDINANCE: Brenda Cagle noted that she has a letter from Water Board Chairman Hank Van Parys regarding the CAC recommendations for an Aquifer Ordinance. The CAC will review it at the next meeting, along with Anne Rubin’s response.

INTERMUNICIPAL TASK FORCE: Brenda Cagle reported that the Village is working on money for an engineering study. The Task Force would like a memo from the CAC with reasons for supporting the Centers and Greenspaces Plan. Laurie asked if the Task Force would include Energy Star building requirements in the Plan. Brenda thought that the CAC was concentrating on an Energy Star Ordinance for the Town, which would cover it, but Laurie noted that it would be reinforcement. Brenda will ask Planner Michele Greig about incorporating the requirement in the Centers and Greenspaces Plan.

ENERGY STAR FORUM FOR BUILDERS: Laurie Husted reported that builder Dave Seymour has constructed an energy star home, and was pleased with the experience. Laurie will arrange a date for a builders' forum. New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) representative Pat Coutney Strong has a good speaker and will help with the program. Laurie will ask Dave Seymour and Steve Cornacchini about suggested dates and a list of builders to invite.

CAC members discussed putting the proposal for an Energy Star Building Ordinance on the Town Board agenda. Brenda Cagle will ask Supervisor Sue Crane about a schedule.

HUDSONIA BIODIVERSITY MAPPING: Discussion was tabled.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, September 10, 2008 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H, Ellis, Secretary