

**TOWN OF RED HOOK  
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting  
March 11, 2009

Members present: Chairwoman Brenda Cagle, Laurie Husted, Zoie Riel, Susan Ellis, Denis Collet, Dr. Jane Ferguson; Denise Barton, Mike Ignatowski, associate Molly Williams

Guests: Councilman Robert McKeon

Chairwoman Brenda Cagle called the meeting to order at 7:15 P.M. The CAC welcomed Denis Collet as a new member, and Molly Williams as an associate researcher. Corrections to the minutes of the February 11, 2009 meeting: Denis Collet noted that under the Photovoltaic Grant, the name of the Hudson Valley Clean Energy representative is Jeff Irish, not English. Denis and Denise Barton also noted that Denis was the person who gave the information on the performance of the Tivoli and Omega Institute reed beds for sewage treatment. Brenda Cagle clarified that the CAC had been designated as an interested agency in the positive declaration for the Centers and Greenspaces Plan, not asked to act as an interested agency. The minutes of the February meeting were approved as amended with a motion made by Jane Ferguson and seconded by Zoie Riel.

**CENTERS AND GREENSPACES PLAN SCOPING DOCUMENTS:** Brenda Cagle asked CAC members if there were any questions or comments on the documents, as she had no feedback. Molly Williams asked if the current biodiversity study project covered any of the area of the Centers and Greenspaces Plan. Brenda answered that it is not within the biodiversity study area. Laurie Husted asked if biodiversity or unique wildlife are mentioned in the report. Brenda noted that it is a generic document, and those issues can be asked in the SEQR review. Molly Williams offered to review the scoping document and write comments about the habitats, and particularly look for vernal pools in the area.

**LOGO:** Laurie Husted presented a draft logo prepared by John Schmidt. The CAC expressed appreciation for his effort, which is an attractive symbol of “green” issues, but the CAC wants the “hook” symbol for Red Hook included, with the idea of “greening of Red Hook.”

**“GREEN SPOTS” ON PANDA:** Brenda Cagle reported that she spoke with Susan Simon about putting “green spots” on PANDA. Councilman Robert McKeon spoke with the Town Board, and they approved the idea if it works for PANDA. Laurie Husted suggested that CAC members put ideas for spots on the Google document for the CAC. Then if the CAC could pick a day for filming, a group of subjects could be done to cover a period of time – perhaps 6 months. Susan Simon also noted that the Chamber of Commerce would be willing to include a “zero waste” article in their newsletter.

Brenda Cagle noted that Susan Simon suggested that the CAC ask Luigi Coppola if he would partner on a “Buy Local” project by offering discounts to participating customers. Susan Ellis said that such a partnership probably should be offered to all similar businesses. Denis Collet

noted that there still should be a way to recognize businesses. Susan Ellis added that the CAC needs to be unbiased.

**RECYCLING BROCHURE:** Laurie Husted asked CAC members to take sections of the draft Rent Reuse and Repair brochure and call to see if businesses still want to be listed. Susan Ellis suggested that there should be a press release to ask that people with businesses fitting into the categories notify the CAC if they would like to be listed, as the CAC is not likely to identify all of the ones available. Susan Ellis will look at the Chamber of Commerce listing of businesses to find those that might qualify. Zoie Riel stated that brochures are a limited way of reaching people, and that the CAC needs to find other avenues, such as the website. Jane Ferguson suggested that the CAC website be listed on the brochure.

Zoie Riel noted that she would like to work on a project to divert organic material from the waste stream. She reported that in Toronto, waste haulers pick up organics every other week, and garbage on the other two weeks. Susan Ellis suggested that perhaps neighborhood composting projects could be arranged.

Brenda Cagle reported that John Franklin (Mr. Green Jeans) at Williams Lumber will take batteries, compact fluorescents and small electronics for recycling.

Zoie Riel reported that there would be no Household Hazardous Waste Day at Red Hook this year. She added that the Green Fair at the Fairgrounds on April 25 and 26, 2009 will do an electronics collection.

**EARTH DAY ACTIVITIES:** Brenda Cagle reported that the Town Tree Committee will be handing out seedlings, and Village Green will be planting groundcover. Brenda will be planting, and noted that any volunteers would be welcome.

Molly Williams knows a woman from Esopus who does composting with worms and would be willing to speak. Molly suggested that it might be an activity for children and that the CAC have a handout for composting. Molly is willing to promote the activity. Brenda noted that AGWAY is willing to do a discount on composting bins for Earth Day and suggested that composting activity be located there. Denis Collet offered to contact the High School to find some students who would be willing to join the group at AGWAY and demonstrate to customers how to use a compost bin. Molly and Denis will take care of a press release with Town Clerk Sue McCann.

Brenda Cagle asked if it would be possible to have an alternative fuel vehicle display at the Town Hall. Denise said that she would ask her husband Mike if it would be possible to arrange.

**RAIN BARRELS. RAIN GARDENS AND LAWN CARE:** These will be a focus for the month of May. Zoie Riel noted that she has not yet developed a program.

**CAC ROUNDTABLE AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL:** Brenda Cagle and Susan Ellis attended the roundtable, and reported on the various activities of

other towns. Red Hook was grouped with Rhinebeck, Hyde Park, Clinton and Pleasant Valley. Rhinebeck CAC noted that it uses the biodiversity study (completed with a grant) all the time for reviews, and has created a question sheet from it for applications. Hyde Park has had a partial biodiversity assessment done. Clinton has facilitated adoption of a wetlands ordinance to protect wetlands from ½ to 12.4 acres, and received a grant from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets to develop a Farmland Protection Plan. Pleasant Valley is working on trails and setting up a Geographic Information System (GIS).

Red Hook CAC spoke of its Photovoltaic System project, biodiversity project goals and working with Sheila Buff of Milan to establish a watershed protection group, Stream Alliance of Northern Dutchess (SAND). Hyde Park is interested in participating. Brenda noted that Cooperative Extension would be willing to come to the area to do a presentation.

**ENERGY STAR ORDINANCE PROPOSAL – PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS:** CAC members discussed the comments made at the public hearing for the proposed Energy Star building ordinance. Mike Ignatowski and Jane Ferguson said that one of the main objections was that people were being told what to do. Councilman Robert McKeon noted that the building code has many do's and don'ts, some much more esoteric, and the Energy Star program is performance based, not specifying the means of construction. Denis Collet added that 10 Long Island communities have adopted Energy Star standards, and that the owner/builder has the right to choose what options they will include. He suggested that if you raise the bar for standards, the current quality local builders would be protected from new businesses trying to undercut prices.

Molly Williams suggested that the CAC needs to address the local benefits. Denis Collet said that economically, socially and politically it makes sense to support a standard that will reduce use of energy and greenhouse gas emissions. Laurie Husted noted that we have local advocates in builders Steve Cornacchini and Joseph Malcarne.

CAC members discussed whether or not to plan another builders' forum, but decided that a question and answer session would be better. Mike Ignatowski asked that it address why it is a good idea to mandate Energy Star. The CAC should ask if builders will lose incentives from New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) if Energy Star is mandated. The CAC needs to address what is involved in the certification process for builders and more precise figures for the potential additional costs of construction. Susan Ellis suggested that it would be helpful to answer the concern that any increased cost would prevent new home buyers from qualifying for mortgages.

**TREES FOR TRIBS (TRIBUTARIES):** Brenda Cagle reported that she met with a Department of Environmental Conservation Hudson River Estuary Program representative for the Trees for Tribs program. They looked at the area of the Recreation Park wetlands trail and the former Fraleigh Farm stream area. The Trees for Tribs program will provide trees for a spring planting at the Recreation Park, and will consider a fall planting along the Sawkill Creek at the former Fraleigh farm.

**BRUSH DUMPING:** Recreation Park Director John Kuhn has removed truck loads of brush from the northern end of the wetlands trail.

Jane Ferguson wanted to note that there is no place for Town residents to dump brush, and that it is an issue that should be addressed. Councilman Robert McKeon suggested that the CAC write a memo stating that brush needs to be dealt with in an ecologically sound manner.

**SEWER PROPOSAL:** Village Trustee Brent Kovalchik has asked for a letter of support from the CAC for a proposed sewage treatment system at Red Hook Commons. It will provide tertiary treatment of wastewater. The CAC will write a letter of support.

**RUTH OJA ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP:** Brenda Cagle reported that the Ruth Oja Environmental Scholarship has a balance of \$1,937.70. Applications have been placed in the Library, and are due in April. Brenda noted that the CAC had broadened the criteria to include environmental activities. Jane Ferguson has a friend interested in fundraising. Susan Ellis noted that her understanding of the Community Foundation's regulations is that the fund must reach a total of \$10,000 within 5 years, or it reverts to a general scholarship fund, which would defeat the purpose of the environmental scholarship.

**PHOTOVOLTAIC ENERGY METER DISPLAY:** Denis Collet reported that he has the monitor that will display real time use, but wants a better photo for the display. Hudson Valley Clean Energy has to wire the connection to the photovoltaic meter.

Brenda Cagle announced that the CAC has received a thank you from the Red Hook Library for the donation of the book on the importance of Biodiversity.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, April 8, 2009 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H, Ellis, Secretary