

**TOWN OF RED HOOK  
CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting  
November 18, 2009 (rescheduled date)

Members present: Chairwoman Brenda Cagle, Susan Ellis, Laurie Husted, Anne Rubin, Denise Barton, Denis Collet

Guests: intern Lindsay Chapman, research associate Molly Williams, Councilman Robert McKeon

Chairwoman Brenda Cagle called the meeting to order at 7:10 P. M. Denise Barton noted as correction to the October minutes that Councilman Robert McKeon announced that the Energy Star Ordinance requirement for new building permits was taking effect in October. The minutes of the October meeting as amended were approved with a motion made by Anne Rubin and seconded by Denis Collet. Denise Barton noted that the PV meter reading was 4749 kwh.

**NEW YORK STATE ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NYSERDA):** Anne Rubin reported that the \$150,000 NYSERDA grant that the Town had applied for to establish a program for assisting local solar installations needed agreement for a larger participation from the Town. NYSERDA was looking for a 10% commitment from the Town; The Town Board approved an extra \$3,000 to make the Town's share \$15,000. Jeff Irish of Hudson Valley Clean Energy also noted that the grant application did not include enough technical information. Laurie Husted noted that Bard College received grant approval for solar thermal projects on two dormitories and energy conservation projects.

Denis Collet and Robert McKeon were on a debriefing call with NYSERDA and were told that the bidding for grants would be competitive. There were 37 awards given, with 4 in the area, and perhaps one for a photovoltaic project. Since Red Hook placed in the top 1/3 of the tier of applicants for whom grants were considered, they will resubmit the grant application next week for the second round. Denis noted that Jeff Irish's level of detail is "shovel ready."

**ICLEI:** Intern Lindsay Chapman gave her final report on the data gathered for carbon emissions for the Town. She noted that she is scheduled to present her findings to the Village of Red Hook on December 7, 2009 and to the Town Board on December 8. She reported that the total carbon emissions outlook for Red Hook was 61,200 tons for 2005 and 60,991 tons for 2008. Susan Ellis asked if Lindsay would address the fact that there has actually been a reduction, and Lindsay noted that lower heating degree days plus the economic and development slow-down in 2008 slightly reduced the carbon emissions. Anne Rubin asked if Lindsay could show the percentage comparisons with 2008.

Lindsay continued to say that the real impact of emissions is from Town residents, equaling 54% of the total community emissions, with municipal emissions only being 1% of the total. The Town had pursued a NYSERDA energy efficiency grant to replace well pumps for the water system, but it would not be cost efficient until the pumps quit.

Anne Rubin asked if there was any information about Towns that had shared services and to what extent they would reduce consumption. Lindsay noted that Red Hook already has some shared

services. Denis Collet asked if Lindsay could quantify hours of use for lighting for ballfields and tennis courts, hours during which those facilities may be unoccupied.

Lindsay spoke of reduction targets. She noted that the Kyoto Protocol asked commitment of a 7% reduction of carbon emissions from 1990 levels by 2012; EU 15 countries are aiming for 8%; the Mayor' Climate Agreement has 500 major US cities agreeing to 7%, and the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 set a goal of 17% reduction by 2020. Lindsay asked where Red Hook would fit in? Many municipal governments in the Northeast are establishing a baseline of year 2005, and following an ICLEI goal of 1% reduction per year.

Lindsay recommended that the CAC work on building awareness. Lindsay attended the NYSAAC environmental conference, where she was told that the United States is one of the least educated countries about carbon emissions and climate change. Perhaps the CAC could arrange an event of movies for the community with experts available for discussion.

The CAC discussed measures already in place affecting residential energy consumption, noting that Red Hook banned outdoor wood furnaces for heating, and established the Energy Star Compliance Ordinance for new construction. There is discussion of and interest in a Red Hook Green Homes project for weatherization. Lindsay noted that if 100 homes participated in weatherization projects, Red Hook could save 257 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. If ½ of the homes participated, the Town could achieve an 8% reduction, or 4,983 tons of greenhouse gas emissions.

For commercial uses, Lindsay suggested that the town create a forum where NYSERDA and federal energy grants are visible to businesses, and help them with the forms. It would help to implement a Red Hook Green Business Program. Lindsay noted that if ½ of the town businesses participated, Red Hook could avoid roughly 780 tons of greenhouse gases, assuming a 30% reduction of energy use.

In the area of transportation, Lindsay noted that there already is a Bard shuttle and the Loop bus, and a no idling zone in front of Linden Avenue School and Mill Road School. She suggested that the CAC encourage ride sharing for commuting. Also mentioned was NuRide, an internet network facilitating carpooling and offering rewards for shared rides or use of non-motorized or public transportation. Lindsay also recommended the adoption of the Centers and Greenspaces Plan as a means of promoting a walkable community.

For the School District, Lindsay recommended weatherization of all the school buildings; assuming a 25% increase in efficiency, the result would be a reduction of 350 tons of greenhouse gasses. Lindsay is waiting to hear if the Red Hook School District is eligible for the New York Power Authority's 100 Megawatt Solar Invitation, which could provide 1-20% of the middle school's power.

To reduce waste, Lindsay suggested that more education of the community and students about recycling would be helpful. She also added that more available use of the Recycling Center goods exchange would be good. She noted that The Middle School has set up a composting unit.

Discussing government measures, Lindsay noted that the Town has already had an energy audit, installed a 30 KW photovoltaic system, upgraded fluorescent lights to T-8 fixtures and ballasts, installed occupancy sensors in the bathrooms, installed programmable thermostats and done

weatherstripping. She recommended that the Town consider installing LED lights and timers for the ball fields and tennis and basketball courts. She noted that the highway garage accounts for 33% of the Town government's energy usage. There are no current action items identified, but as the vehicle fleet is replaced, the Town should look at hybrid or electric or other more energy efficient vehicles. Street lights and traffic signals should be converted to 100% LED, which would save ½ of the electric consumption. The Town did sign the Climate Smart Communities Pledge, and these measures would reflect that commitment.

Brenda Cagle asked Lindsay whether or not she recommended the ICLEI membership. Lindsay answered that at this time most of the benefit was in using the software provided by ICLEI. It will be more crucial in 2011, and Lindsay does support what ICLEI is doing in climate change issues. Denise Barton added that if you can use the ICLEI information and have an energy coordinator, then it is definitely useful.

Lindsay informed Brenda Cagle that if the CAC wants to follow up on the carbon emissions inventory with other work by an intern, that the CAC needs to write up a proposal by January. The CAC gave Lindsay some suggestions to tweak her presentation, and thanked her for all her work on the inventory and power point presentation.

**HUDSON VALLEY GREEN DRINKS:** Brenda Cagle reported that Denise Barton, Susan Ellis, Laurie Husted and she attended a HV Green Drinks networking event at the Rhinecliff Hotel. New York State Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation, Bill Janeway, spoke of the Green Hotels Pilot Program

**STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW (SEQR) PRESENTATION BY DUTCHESS COUNTY PLANNING:** Brenda Cagle and Anne Rubin attended the SEQR presentation and reported that speakers from the State spoke about how to assess the impacts of new building. They will pass on the information gathered to the Planning Board.

**BIODIVERSITY WORKSHOP:** Anne Rubin attended an all day workshop focused on integrating biodiversity principles in local ordinances. She reported that they did exercises taking plans for development and choosing one that would preserve biodiversity. They also had to choose what regulations needed to be in place to arrive at the plan that would do so. They discussed open space plans, easements, farmland protection, cluster development and purchase of development rights. Molly Williams asked how to get people to build nearer to the road, instead of having long driveways. Anne Rubin replied that incentives need to be worked on.

Brenda Cagle, Molly Williams and Anne Rubin attended the final presentation for the Hudsonia Biodiversity course on October 28, where their work was evaluated. Supervisor Sue Crane has suggested that they continue their biodiversity work from the Northeast corner south to Route 199.

**GREENWAY GRANT:** Since Councilman Robert McKeon secured a grant under the GREENWAY Community Grant Program, the CAC considered whether or not it could apply for a grant under the GREENWAY Compact. Applications are due December 11, 2009; awards would be 5,000 – 10, 000. Molly Williams would help on the grant and with a match for Hudsonia work.

**NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCILS (NYSACC) CONFERENCE:** Lindsay Chapman reported on the NYSACC Environmental Conference held at Watkins Glen. She attended sessions discussing agricultural easements,

“Transition Towns,” and LEED certified neighborhoods. The “Transition Town” concept involves a coalition of efforts to move away from peak oil use. It is a 12 step process to make the community aware of climate change and promote a “great reskilling,” such as teaching basic home repairs, how to garden and how to compost.

The Leadership in Energy Efficiency Design (LEED) lecture addressed establishing protocol for LEED certified neighborhoods. Molly Williams noted that LEED certification can be costly. Anne Rubin asked if there are any incentives to encourage towns to use LEED standards. Lindsay replied that for small towns with a struggling economy, it would be difficult to achieve.

**GREEN SPOT:** CAC members discussed ideas for a GREEN SPOT. Laurie Husted offered to do one on NuRide carpooling. Brenda Cagle noted that it would depend upon PANDA’s schedule.

**ENERGY SUBCOMMITTEE:** Denis Collet reported that he hasn’t heard from Dan Smith and Andes Stewart Gonzales about the status of the renewable energy survey. Denis went to the Red Hook Health Food store and was given permission to use a table outside as a base for doing surveys. He noted that the committee needs to be at a point where they get a response from the community that residents want a program. Lindsay Chapman, Laurie Husted , Dan Smith and Denis worked to distill the survey information. The Middle School “Who Cares Club” will have Dan Smith speak to the members. Village Trustee Ed Blundell has allowed a web link to the survey on the Village water bill.

CAC members discussed the PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) Program, which is a 400 million dollar Federal program of municipal loans. They are low risk private loans, because they are backed by Town tax assessments. The applications are due December 11, 2009. Denise Barton asked who would administer the program; Denis noted that he would contact Dorrian Dale to see how Long Island Green Homes handled that.

Brenda Cagle asked Denis if the subcommittee needed help. Denis said that help with phone calls, a grant writer and research of what is needed would help. Brenda or Laurie will contact Pat Courtney Strong. Councilman Robert McKeon will work on the budget for a grant writer. Lindsay Chapman agreed to research the application process. Molly Williams volunteered to do research and writing for the grant; she is interested in the weatherization process.

**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION FUNDING CUTS:** Brenda Cagle reported that the proposed 2010 county budget has eliminated the funding for the CCEDC Environmental Program, and the Geographic Information System Lab (GIS), as well as seriously cut funding for other Cooperative Extension programs. Susan Ellis passed out postcard to send in support of restoring funding and CAC members were asked to contact legislators.

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

**\*\*NOTE\*\*** Lindsay Chapman will present her greenhouse gas emissions power point to the Village Board on Monday, December 7, 2009 – meeting begins at 7:30 P.M. and to the Town Board on Tuesday, December 8, 2009 at 8:30 P.M.

**NEXT MEETING:** There will be no December meeting; the next meeting will be Wednesday, January 13, 2010. HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary