

Town of Saugerties

Conservation Advisory Commission

Meeting minutes for March 19, 2015

Present: L. Thornton, C. Tienken Sr., M. O'Donnell, M. Wrolsen, C. Tienken Jr., G. Marzec, B. Sawchuk, S. Guerin, and K. Benson

Absent: Robert Gehring

Convened: 7:05 pm, Saugerties Town Hall.

- L. Thornton provided updates from the most recent Town Board meetings.
- Approval of last month's minutes was tabled until the next meeting so that everyone could review the draft.
- S. Guerin had several items to discuss with the CAC:
 - o There was a discussion about preparation of the agenda for the CAC meetings. S. Guerin will put the agenda together, so CAC members should get items to him by the Sunday prior to the meetings.
 - o Steve requested that we readopt Robert's Rules of Order. A motion was made, seconded and approved by all.
 - o There is no movement on the Bristol Beach issue, and Steve stated that we may have to take another path towards initiating action at the state level.
 - o Steve brought up the issue of cleaning debris in streams and suggested stream walks to identify problem areas. A notification could be sent to the public on behalf of the CAC to determine if there are interested participants. The Boy Scouts may be interested in helping, so Steve will contact John Stegmayer about their potential participation. L. Thornton suggested that Steve also contact Nancy Forsythe to determine if the Girl Scouts have an interest in the project.
 - o The Lower Esopus dredging issue was discussed. Steve will draft a letter to Sen. Schumer and NYC Mayor DeBlasio to stress the navigation problem that sedimentation has caused in the creek.
 - o Steve mentioned that the Soil and Water Conservation Service has fish for pond stocking available. He asked G. Marzec to contact the webmaster and include this info on the Town's web site. Steve will email TV23 to include this info on the local TV station.
- M. O'Donnell had several items to discuss:
 - o Open Space Goals – Ensure that landowners that want to have a conservation easement have the information necessary to do that.
 - Steve suggested getting Mr. Winters from the Woodstock Land Conservancy to give a brief talk to the CAC. M. Wrolsen will contact him to see when he is available.
 - We could also have public service announcements on TV23 on behalf of the CAC to help with outreach.
 - o The County is asking all towns to support additional PCB dredging up-river by General Electric. Discussion was tabled until all had a chance to read the proposal and then we'll vote on possible recommendations at the next meeting.
 - o There was a handout of questions from Mary and G. Marzec regarding the Pilgrim Pipeline that were answered by a company representative after a meeting with Supv. Helsmoortel.

- Mary added some images to the CAC web page on the Town's site.
- Mary initiated discussion on the process of acquiring new members for the CAC. Gerry agreed that the process appears to be inconsistent since not all members were aware of recent actions.
- M. Wrolsen provided a summary of recent Planning Board actions:
 - The Planning Board will be the lead agency for the review of the hotel near the Thruway interchange on Route 32.
 - The blasting on Richter's property on Route 32 was within 500 feet of six houses.
 - Verizon is proposing a cell tower off of John Carle Rd. in Mt. Marion. There will be a Planning Board hearing next month.
- Mary Anne also mentioned that there will be an invasive species forum at the Carey Institute on March 21, 2015 from 9-12.
- G. Marzec mentioned that this forum offers training credits and stated that planning and zoning boards are required to take 4 credits per year. Gerry asked if the CAC would be interested in having a continuing education requirement. B. Sawchuk stated that we opted at a past CAC meeting to attend training sessions as they were available and of interest. The NYS local government services website has a number of courses available.
 - There is a Hudson River summit in Poughkeepsie on April 16, 2015 from 9-3:30. The event has a nominal fee and is sponsored by the NYSDEC Estuary Program.
 - The NYSDEC has issued a Conservation Plan for Bald Eagles in NYS. Comments are being accepted through April 10, 2015 at wildlife@dec.ny.gov.
- C. Tienken Sr. provided an overview of the proposed power line upgrades. There are many advantages within the existing right-of-way. Cliff explained that congestion was causing a loss of revenue for the utilities over the past 10 years. Upgrades would allow more efficient routing of power. Microprocessors will be used for fault detections. The five grid owners can save \$9 billion over the course of 10 years. This is substantial considering the cost is between \$130-550 million depending upon the route. Cliff stated that the route through Saugerties was least likely and most expensive.

As there were no further topics for discussion, our meeting was adjourned at ca. 8:35 pm.