

**Conservation Advisory Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
February 15, 2018**

**Attending:** Skip Arthur, Al Bruno, Ann Bryan, Mike Harkavy, Mary O'Donnell, Elizabeth Shafer, Mary Anne Wrolsen, Councilman Mike MacIsaac.

Guests: Patti Kelly, Carol Furman, Bob Hlavarty, Leslie Surprenant, Councilman Schoonmaker, County Legislator Joe Maloney, Europa McGovern

**Introductions** Visitors were introduced by the chairperson

**Approval of Minutes** Minutes of the January meeting were approved.

**Presentation**

Europa McGovern, Hudson Valley Regional Council Coordinator for the Clean Energy Community program (CEC), presented an overview of the (CEC) and the Climate Smart Community program (CSC). She highlighted the ten high -impact actions for CEC designation. Four out of the ten are required for a town to be designated. She noted that Saugerties has completed two out of the four high-impact actions, has almost completed a third and is working on a fourth. Certification as a CSC is also one of the ten high-impact actions. Upon completion of four CEC high-impact actions, the town will receive a \$5,000 grant. An email received in February 2018 stated that a \$250,000 grant opportunity would be available upon completing CEC four high-impact actions. That grant opportunity is no longer available. Grant opportunities for the CSC program will be announced in May.

The goal of the CSC program is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in municipal buildings and in the community. Certification requirements for the CSC program were discussed. Initial actions are: a town sign a pledge and register, appoint a task force and appoint a coordinator. Saugerties has completed the first action by having registered as a CSC. It is recommended that the Town Board appoint the CAC to serve as the task force. It was noted that the Superintendents of Highways and Parks/Recreation, and Vernon need to be involved. A discussion on who should be appointed as coordinator followed. Mary O'Donnell agreed to be considered for appointment as coordinator. Europa suggested that the Village of Saugerties be approached regarding participation in CSC certification. Mary will send *A Guide to Local Officials* for the CSC program to Mike M and John. Patti Kelly has begun gathering data on fuel use.

A discussion on LED street lighting, one of the ten high-impact actions, took place. Saugerties has been using Central Hudson to change LEDs as bulbs burn out. The question whether Central Hudson changing to LEDs has slowed down the process was raised.

A discussion on EV charging stations followed. The town has installed an EV station at the Kiwanis Ice Arena and is looking to install another one at a location to be determined. Europa stated that funding is available for EVs and for charging stations. Most charging stations are AC level 2. DC fast charge – take 30 minutes to charge – more costly to install (\$40K) – need 100A. Some cars cannot accept these. It makes more sense on highways where a 30- minute charge is needed (\$8/charge).

**Invasive Species Report**

Mike H reported that he contacted the Esopus Town Supervisor Shannon Harris and Carol Tomassetti who runs the harvester for Water chestnuts removal from the shores of the Hudson River. A discussion on the use of the harvester for Water chestnut removal from the Saugerties beach area and other methods of removal took place. The question of whether Saugerties was part of the grant that funded the harvester used in Esopus was raised.

Removing Water chestnuts manually near the beach was discussed. How will the vegetation be transported off site and what can be done with the removed vegetation was discussed. The county recycling center will not

accept the vegetation. Ann will check with a local farmer to see if that is an option as a disposal area. Mike M will ask Doug Myer. Mary raised the question of insurance coverage by the town for volunteers who assist with removal of the vegetation. John will research if the volunteers are covered under the town's policy or if a rider is needed.

Mike H stated that PRISM has announced a \$10,000 grant opportunity for addressing invasive species. Due date for filing the application is March 12. It was agreed that CAC is not ready with a proposal at this time, but will work to position itself to apply for a grant in 2019 to address the problem of Water chestnuts and Eurasian Milfoil in the creek.

Mike H introduced Leslie Surprenant, a retired NYSDEC biologist specializing in invasive species. She explained that the only effective options for Eurasian milfoil are suction harvester or benthic mats. Diver assisted suction harvesting is effective on milfoil, but expensive. First we need an expert to analyze the species and a map of where they are located. She advised that Water chestnuts can be controlled by getting them early in the season. Leslie explained that it is important to prevent new invasive species from being introduced into the creek. Mary mentioned the dehydration method whereby the level of the creek is lowered in the winter when below freezing temperatures kill the milfoil.

#### **Town Board Liaison Report** No Report.

#### **Ulster County Environmental Management Council (UCEMC) Report**

Mary reported that the UCEMC discussed the Lincoln Park Grid Project under consideration in the Town of Ulster. UCEMC will draft a letter for review at the council's next meeting. She also reported that legislation has been drafted regulating the use of plastic carryout bags in Ulster County. It will be considered by the UC Energy and Environmental Committee before it is considered by the legislature.

#### **Bristol Beach Report**

Mike H reported that the Advisory Committee made a site visit. It was decided that the Stoley Road entrance is preferred because of its location and safety issues accessing the site. Emerick Road is not capable of transporting heavy equipment onto the site. It was determined that restoration of the beach would be expensive, and that the focus at this time should be on establishing access, trails, bridges and passive recreation. The Advisory Committee plans another site visit on Monday.

#### **Lincoln Park Grid Project Report**

Elizabeth reported that a draft EIS and scoping document are available. Toxic emissions from two towers on the site are of concern. A discussion on a response by the CAC and the Town Board to the project was discussed. It was recommended that the Town Board issue a comment. Public comments on the project may be limited to 30 days in which case quick action is needed. Saugerties would be considered an interested party under SEQRA. Elizabeth stated that the public comment period should be extended to 90 days for all interested parties to ask questions, review documents and present views on the project.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm