

Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon

Monthly Meeting Minutes for January 9, 2017

Samson Environmental Center, Darrow School

Present: CAC members Cynthia Creech, David Farren, Peg Munves, Craig Westcott

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. The minutes for our last meeting on December 12, 2016, were approved without comment. Craig Westcott requested that the proposed meeting agenda be sent to CAC members for feedback a week prior to each meeting. David Farren agreed.

Cynthia Creech reported that the draft ordinance on solar energy prepared by the Zoning Re-write Committee will be discussed at tomorrow evening's Town Board meeting. The decommissioning piece may still require work. We reviewed our presentation of the progress report on the Natural Resources Conservation Plan (NRCP) to the Town Board at their December 13 meeting and agreed we held the attention of board members. The presentation lasted 30 minutes rather than the expected 15 as the first agenda item and members asked good questions. Cynthia also noted that the Town Highway Superintendent mentioned, to her surprise, that he spares the ancient roadside oak on her property when he sands Cemetery Road in an effort to preserve it. She had wondered why snow always surrounded the tree on that patch of road.

David Farren shared a draft of his fourth quarter Progress Report for the NRCP to be submitted to the Hudson River Estuary Program and secured signatures from Cynthia, Peg Munves and Craig for their volunteer hours during the fourth quarter. We donated 76.25 hours in all during the quarter, bringing the running total to 435.25 hours. We carefully reviewed descriptions of upcoming work in the report. Cynthia has secured clearer maps of agricultural lands from the assessor and will report back at our next meeting. Craig will continue to pursue leadership at The Abode and staff at Flying Deer Nature Center. April would appear to be the best month for their assistance. In addition, we clarified scheduling assignments for Peg, Craig and David.

David also shared a draft of his written report on site verification visits for the NRCP, starting with the visit to Ginger Delano's property on September 14 and concluding with the visit to Mountain Road School on December 7, eight site visits in all. Thanks to Darrow School for the use of their copier.

Craig Westcott demonstrated the new Verizon Ellipsis tablet that the town purchased for the CAC's site verification visits. We discussed a training regimen involving Conrad Vispo for Peg and David especially.

David will write a first draft of the CAC Annual Report for 2016 and distribute to members for feedback. We discussed preparation of an NRCP poster to be displayed at the Farmers Market, town picnic, during public forums and at Town Hall. Craig will continue to investigate material costs and report back.

The next CAC monthly meeting will be Wednesday, March 8, 2016, starting at 6:30 P.M. at Darrow's Samson Environmental Center. We hope the change of day will resolve a conflict for CAC member Jack Lancto. We expect to respond to Gretchen Stevens's first draft of the NRCP.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by David Farren