

Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon

Monthly Meeting Minutes for June 5, 2017

Samson Environmental Center, Darrow School

Present: CAC members Cynthia Creech, David Farren, Jack Lancto, Peg Munves, Craig Westcott, Guest Gretchen Stevens (Hudsonia)

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 P.M. We discussed the minutes for two previous monthly meetings, on March 8 and April 26, and a special meeting on March 21. Craig Westcott had taken notes for the March 8 meeting and these should be posted. We dedicated the special meeting on March 21 to responding to the first draft of the Natural Resources Conservation Plan (NRCP) prepared by Gretchen Stevens. Gretchen and Ingrid Haeckel of the Hudson River Estuary Program were our guests. The third meeting on April 26, following a public hearing on sign ordinances at Town Hall, revolved solely around the CAC's response to the proposed solar energy ordinance and to the site plan for the proposed Dunkin' Donuts on Routes 20/22. Cynthia Creech helped craft the language, to which we agreed, and submitted the CAC responses as requested by the Town Clerk.

Gretchen Stevens shared her second draft of the NRCP, seeking feedback. She expressed a concern that the plan's priorities not be weighted in a way that might offend Town Board members. Cynthia provided completed maps of all agricultural lands in town. Gretchen recommended that we continue with site visits through the summer. Scheduling by Peg Munves will be somewhat challenging since David Farren, her usual colleague on site visits, will be away for 2 weeks in June and again in July.

We discussed the upcoming public forum on June 28 at Town Hall. Refreshments will be provided although their source has to be decided. It is possible that the CAC budget could cover expenses. Peg will divide the list of various board members – Town Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals – among us to call with personal invitations to the public forum. Peg volunteered to remind the landowners whose properties we have visited. Notice of the forum appeared in both the town newsletter delivered to every post box in early May and in the Grow the Valley newsletter in late May.

We praised the NRCP banner produced by Craig. The designer and printer will bill the town directly, with total costs coming in under \$100. The banner will be displayed at Farmer's Markets, the town picnic, during public forums and other presentations, and in the interim, at Town Hall. The banner was designed to be a conversation starter.

David briefly recounted his attendance at the Family Fun Day at Hand Hollow Conservation Area, hosted by the Columbia Land Conservancy from 3:00 - 7:00 P.M. on Sunday, May 28. The CLC provided a tented table with a CAC sign. A number of guests expressed great interest in the Hudsonia maps he displayed.

We agreed that the CAC has no objections to proposed Local Law #1 ending the requirement for the town to publish lengthy resolutions in the local newspaper. David informed the Town Clerk.

The next CAC monthly meeting will be Monday, July 10, 2016, starting at 6:30 P.M. at Darrow's Samson Environmental Center.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by David Farren