***Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon***

Monthly Meeting Minutes for August 10, 2016 *(respectfully submitted by David Farren)*

Samson Environmental Center, Darrow School

Present: Cynthia Creech, David Farren, Jack Lancto, Craig Westcott

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 P.M.

Cynthia Creech reviewed the CAC’s sponsorship of the Solar Energy public hearings scheduled for Friday, September 9, at 10:00 A.M. and Wednesday, September 14, at 7:00 P.M. Both hearings will be held at the Town Hall, facilitated by the Zoning Rewrite Committee. She also reminded us that the second hearing on the sidewalk project is scheduled for tomorrow at 7:00 P.M. in the high school gym. The first hearing was held on Monday and drew 16 attendees, most of whom were supportive of a limited sidewalk project. We rescheduled our CAC meeting due to the conflict with that hearing.

Craig Westcott confirmed that the Hands to Work coordinator at Darrow School has agreed to allow use by the Natural Resources Conservation Plan (NRCP) team of the minivan that departs each Wednesday morning for Mountain Road School. The van would head first to the school and then to any site selected for a verification visit. Abe Pritzker won’t return to Darrow this fall and Craig will keep us posted on new student volunteers. The first Hands to Work session in the new school year will be 9:00 – 11:20 A.M. on Wednesday, September 7.

David Farren related that Christine Vanderlan of the Columbia Land Conservancy would like to review the findings of the online mapping project with the CAC. She plans to attend our September meeting and will return the photographs taken by Karen Ross for the viewshed analysis project.

David Farren summarized two site verification visits to the parcel along Hand Hollow Road recently conveyed to the Open Space Institute. Gretchen Stevens, David and Cynthia Creech visited the south side on Friday morning, June 17, inventorying extensive wetlands and the Hollow Creek riparian corridor. Gretchen, Conrad Vispo, Craig Westcott and David visited the north side on Friday morning, July 22, inventorying an extensive old field, a woodland pool, and several intermittent streams that had not been mapped. Charlie Burgess at the OSI’s Albany offices confirms that lumbering will begin on the south side in August and expects a report on our findings. Gretchen will write it.

Gretchen will provide maps of the sites we plan to visit throughout the fall. CAC members determined which sites sparked the greatest interest from a list of contacts provided by Peg Munves. Peg will now arrange visit dates. We should count on Wednesday mornings during Hands to Work sessions, which Jack Lancto can participate in, and occasional Friday mornings and Saturdays. Craig’s sons could accompany us on the occasional Saturday and Cynthia may be able to participate on some Wednesdays for an hour or two and the occasional Friday morning. David is looking into IPAD apps that will allow us to pinpoint coordinates for unmapped features.

David wrote the update on the NRCP that was published in the latest town newsletter. He would like to wait until the project is further along before constructing a poster for display at various venues.

The next CAC monthly meeting will be held September 12, 2016, at 6:30 P.M. at the Samson Environmental Center at Darrow School. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 P.M.