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

Monthly Meeting Minutes for November 7, 2016

Samson Environmental Center, Darrow School

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

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

There were no recommended changes to the minutes for our last meeting on September 12, 2016, and the minutes were therefore approved.

Cynthia Creech reviewed the Zoning Re-write Committee’s progress on solar energy following the two public forums held in September, co-sponsored by the CAC. The proposed zoning regulations are nearly complete, with the decommissioning piece the last remaining hurdle. The committee has reached consensus fairly quickly and will ask the CAC to respond to the final draft, expected next month. Also, the CAC supports the Town of Kinderhook’s request to the New Lebanon Town Supervisor for a letter of support for their resolution to add the Kinderhook Creek to the list of New York State’s “designated inland waterways.” The Wyomanock Creek has been added to that list and flows into the Kinderhook at Adam’s Crossing Road in northwestern New Lebanon.

The final public hearing on the 2017 Town Budget will be Thursday, November 10, at 7:15 P.M. Thanks to Cynthia’s advocacy, the CAC budget line will remain the same in 2017 at $2,500. Craig Westcott suggested that we tap into this year’s budget and purchase an IPad for use in the field. An application for tracking our progress during site visits and pinning sites of interest would be transferrable directly into the master QGIS file. Craig volunteered to research the equipment options and David Farren will submit the required voucher in advance of the Town Board’s December meeting, when the expenditure would need to be approved.

David Farren shared his 3rd Quarter Progress Report for the Natural Resource Conservation Plan (NRCP) submitted to the Hudson River Estuary Program. He secured signatures from Cynthia, Peg and Craig for the Donated Labor Documentation forms required by the grant. We donated 81 hours in all during the third quarter. David Farren also shared the four pages given him by Claudia Vispo for identifying ferns and the Maps-n-Trax application that Conrad Vispo helped load onto his IPhone.

The next scheduled NRCP site visit will be November 12 at 9:00 A.M. on Bob and Rae Gilson’s parcels along Salls and Beacon Hill Roads, 90 acres in all. The Salls Road property borders an extensive wetland and has several active streams and mixed deciduous forest. Rae Gilson will guide David Farren and Peg Munves through the property. We also reviewed past site visits to the Burton, DeLano, Himmelstein/Woolhandler, Hand Hollow State Forest, Rose, Ross and Weber parcels. Our visit to the bog parcel on Canaan Road, scheduled for November 2, was postponed because Adelia Moore could not join us.

Craig Westcott is enthused about including Hands to Work students on site visits. Darrow will be purchasing a new minivan to add to their fleet and that should free Craig to reserve one. He needs several weeks to recruit students who could contribute to the NRCP project. December 7 would be the earliest date to include Hands to Work in a site visit and Peg Munves suggested working with the Mountain Road School on that date.

We discussed making a more formal presentation on NRCP progress to the Town Board at their December meeting. As she does customarily, Cynthia will provide an update on the CAC to the Town Board tomorrow night. We calculated that so far we have covered 1,900 of the town’s 20,995 acres, or 9 percent, with NRCP site visits.

The next CAC monthly meeting will be held December 12, 2016, at 6:30 P.M. at Darrow’s Samson Environmental Center.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

*Respectfully submitted by David Farren*