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

Monthly Meeting Minutes for September 12, 2016 *(respectfully submitted by David Farren)*

Samson Environmental Center, Darrow School

Present: CAC members Cynthia Creech, David Farren, Peg Munves; guest Christine Vanderlan, Columbia Land Conservancy

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

Christine Vanderlan reviewed the findings of the online mapping project, a joint project of CLC and the Farmscape Ecology Program, and returned the photographs and viewshed analysis materials that had been lent to Anna Duhon. She provided a new map of Scenic View Points in New Lebanon. The viewshed analysis, nearly completed by a small committee led by Karen Ross a number of years ago, will become part of the Natural Resources Conservation Plan.

Cynthia Creech reviewed the first Solar Energy public hearing convened by the Zoning Rewrite Committee and held September 9 at 10:00 A.M. in the Town Hall. While the turnout was modest – nearly all who attended were appointed members of various town organizations – Ted Salem led a lively forum and received good feedback to assist the Zoning Rewrite Committee in their task of proposing zoning regulations to govern residential and large scale solar arrays. A second hearing, also co-sponsored by the CAC, will be held September 14 at 7:00 P.M.

David Farren shared his file of historic landscape photographs in New Lebanon that were downloaded from the Lebanon Valley Historical Society archives. Assistance from Jeannine Tonetti, Shelley Salem and Doug Banker of the LVHS over several days was much appreciated. The photographs have been shared with Conrad Vispo and Gretchen Stevens and should help pinpoint possible patches of ancient forest in town.

Cynthia agreed to submit the request for a 2017 budget line and represent the CAC in the upcoming town budget hearings. We agreed that the amount requested should be the same as 2016.

Peg Munves shared an updated schedule of potential site verification visits for the NRCP. August turned out to be a blank month. The next scheduled site visit, September 14 at 9:00 A.M., will be to Ginger DeLano’s Hitchcock House property on NYS Route 22 South. The property’s 123 acres include wetlands, meadows, extensive forest and the Knob. We hope to connect once again with a team from Darrow School during Hands to Work sessions and plan a number of site visits for Wednesday mornings throughout the fall.

We expect to receive a first draft of the NRCP from Gretchen Stevens soon. Gretchen prepared a comprehensive report of the site verification visits in June and July to the 483-acre parcel along Hand Hollow Road recently conveyed by Christine Dreyfus to the Open Space Institute. The report had been requested by OSI. Reportedly, OSI has begun its lumbering operations on the south side of the parcel.

The next CAC monthly meeting will be held October 10, 2016, at 6:30 P.M. at the Samson Environmental Center at Darrow School.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.