

Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon
Minutes for the monthly meeting on February 7, 2022, via Zoom

Present: CAC members David Farren, Tyler Fogg, Robert Gilson, Donald Lamonaca, Peg Munves, Bill O'Neill, Steve Powers; Guests Marc Anthonisen, Deb Gordon, Bruce Shenker

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. The minutes for the monthly meeting on January 10, 2022, were approved as amended and will be sent to the Town Clerk for posting.

- **Hudson River Estuary Program Grant:** David Farren informed CAC members that the Estuary Program did not award the \$10,000 grant we applied for in June to update the 2014 Open Space Inventory and create an Open Space Index. He noted that nearly all the grants awarded, announced last October, were for much larger amounts. Since we should create a first-ever Index that can be revisited every ten years to give a snapshot of land use changes in town, we agreed to reapply for the grant and consider requesting a larger amount.
- **Trees for Tribes:** Peg will present a report and planting plan to the Town Board in March.
- **Water Study:** Steve Winkley's Source Water Study is close to being done. The High School announced that a recent well sampling revealed that the PFAS count is slightly higher than the acceptable threshold set by new state regulations. The school is required to test quarterly and will need to install a carbon filtration system to mitigate the problem.
- **Town Landfill:** Given the increase in contamination levels at the High School, there is concern that the abandoned town landfill could be the source. The landfill ceased operation in 1983 and was never capped. Steve Powers has been looking into the history and noted that \$625K paid to the town by the county remains in escrow to help with capping. The cost will be several times that amount. Steve has been told by his DEC contact that capping abandoned landfills is a top priority statewide and the NL site is high on the list. Steve would like to form a landfill committee and Bill O'Neill and Tyler Fogg volunteered to work with him.
- **Critical Environmental Areas:** Bruce Shenker said that all landowners at the Springs have been approached about designating the two cool ravines as a CEA and everyone is on board. Reaching the same consensus for the cool ravine off County Route 9 on CLC land has been more challenging. Bruce said that he feels we have gone as far as we can and should present to the Town Board in March. Donald Lamonaca has been pursuing abutters to the cool ravine off Cemetery and West Hill Roads that is on the parcel now owned by Phil Gellert.
- **Planning Board:** The owners of the former Shed Man lot have abandoned the RV storage facility and will present their former plan for a traditional storage facility that was approved in 2017. However, the new plan calls for five storage buildings. They will have to complete a thorough PB review process. At the January meeting, Carol Reichert and Jerry Shereda proposed an extensive list of events for Sassafras Farm. They were told that Shaker-related events would be permitted under the code, as would 12 large events a year, but that there were too many events. They will need to present again to the PB.
- **Zoning Re-write:** Donald reported that the ZRC is reviewing the flood plain overlay, the effects of renewable energy production on land usage and telecommunications. Steve is working on a hilltop overlay. He said that 5 overlays created previously were never approved by the Town Board. Steve suggested a ridgeline study and said that we should look at what other towns have done. The next meeting on the fourth Monday will discuss RVs and temporary housing.

- **CSC Task Force:** Steve reported that the CSC is currently working on 5 projects with Cornell and Marc Anthonisen provided the background. One of the projects is a funding proposal to build a 10,000-gallon storage tank for the LVPA at their Mill Road location. Other projects include working with the CSC Education Subcommittee on Climate Smart Communications, creating a green jobs training curriculum with a focus on high school students, and working with the County CSC to help reach bronze status. The Cooperative Extension Service is working with the town to develop a Climate Smart Resilience Inventory to help improve our crisis preparedness. Finally, the CSC is working on a heat pump campaign. Once 5 New Lebanon residents install heat pumps, the town will get a \$5,000 grant from NYSERDA. Two residents have recently installed heat pumps, so we have 3 to go.

The next CAC Meeting will be March 7, 2022, at 7:00 pm. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Robert Gilson