

Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon
Minutes for monthly meeting held via Zoom
December 14, 2021

Present: CAC members David Farren, Tyler Fogg, Robert Gilson, Donald LaMonica, Adelia Moore, Peg Munves, Steve Powers
Guests: Bruce Shenker

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. The minutes for the monthly meeting on November 8, 2021, were approved as amended, and will be sent to the Town Clerk for posting.

- **Budget Hearing:** The Town Board has approved our budget request for 2022. This includes an additional \$2,100 for well testing for PFOAs and PFOS. Steve Winkley has volunteered to be helpful. The budget also includes an Open Spaces Inventory grant for \$5,000 from the Hudson River Estuary Program. We have not heard anything from Hudson River Estuary to date. David said he would follow up.
- David attended a presentation on Wildlife Corridors. Preservation of wildlife corridors is encouraged; however, construction of new solar arrays takes precedent.
- David noted that 4 members of the CAC are up for renewal this year. There will be interviews on December 29. Adelia said, that because of other commitments, she is resigning from the committee.
- David asked if we should become members of the New York State Association of Conservation Commissions? The dues are \$75.00 annually. The CAC vote yes, unanimously.
- **Water Study:** The Source Water Protection Plan will be presented to the Town Board in late winter/early spring. Peg wrote the report, but Steve Winkey was very helpful. Steve has been working making new maps that should be posted soon. Peg has found discounted water testing kits for \$247.00. Steve Winkley will provide advice of where to test. There is much more that needs to be done.
- **Infrastructure:** Peg and Deb Gordon have been exploring the possibility of developing wastewater treatment for downtown New Lebanon in conjunction with the BEDC Infrastructure Committee. A feasibility study could be done at zero cost to the town. The idea is to look at both traditional sewage treatment, as well as a more environmentally friendly *living machine system*. Peg noted that South Burlington, Vermont, a town of about 20,000, uses a living machine system.
- **Trees for Tribs:** Donald said that the remaining unplanted plants have been winterized, and that things are closing down for the season. Everything is in good shape. They finished just before the snow. This has been a lot of work. Peg will present the revised plan to the Town Board in March. David will contact the Trees for Tribs staff once the plan has been approved.
- **Critical Environmental Areas:** David Farren will present the idea of identifying cool ravines and the warm spring as Critical Environmental areas to the new Town Board in January. A decision has not been made about how much of a buffer zone to recommend. This will determine how many abutters need to be contacted. Bruce has been reaching out to abutters. So far no one has said no. Phil Gellert, who owns significant property, is concerned about his property value. Gretchen was very aware of the cool ravine's steep slope, which would sharply limit the ability to lumber. David expects to have another meeting with Gretchen.
- **Climate Vulnerability plan:** Steve and Marc reported that while the partnership with Cornell continues, nothing new will happen until next year. Cornell Cooperative Extension and the students did a Climate Resilience Plan in May. It included an Excel spreadsheet with 120 items, and a Word document with up to 10 accommodations. If the Town Board accepts the report, it will be posted on the Town's website.
- **Planning Board:** The plan for the Historic Overlay District has been redrawn. Carol Reichert has proposed opening a museum on their property. Opponents of Nokomis have hired an attorney. The proposed RV storage facility has to respond to the scoping document.
- **Comprehensive Plan Update:** This is on the agenda for the Town Board to approve. The process began in 2018 & finished in 2021. Because of the pandemic, the document is seen as temporary. It will need to be updated in 3 – 5 years. It does include the Natural Resources Conservation Plan. Bard will need to update two maps to reflect the expansion of Hand Hollow. Hudsonia is happy to do it.
- **Zoning Re-write:** Is looking into creating regulations for Food Truck and short-term rentals in the new year.

The next CAC Meeting is January 10, 2022, at 6:30 pm. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Robert Gilson