

Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon
Minutes for monthly meeting July 12, 2023

Present: CAC members: Bob Gilson, Donald Lamonaca, Peg Munves, Bill O' Neill, Steve Powers, Bruce Shenker

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 P.M. It was decided to approve the minutes for the June meeting at the August meeting.

Water Source Protection Plan: Peg Munves said that Bill O'Neill has been working hard on the Implementation plan for the DEC of our Water Source Protection Plan. He has been working with MJ Julien, a Source Water Protection Specialist at the NY Rural Water Association. In order to submit the implementation plan for approval from the State DEC we need to develop a more in-depth strategy. The State wants to know what we are doing and who are partners are; as well as a delineation outlining which work is being done by volunteers, and what is being done by professionals. While the study is still a work in progress, the 4 criteria we are working on are: *Water Quality; Public Education; Critical Environmental Areas & Conservation Overlays for Ground Water Protection; and Local Climate Stability*. In addition to testing residents' and local business owners' wells, a thorough plan will have to include a study of the Springs, the main aquifers of the town, and water along the Route 20 corridor. Peg said that she and Donald Lamonaca would be doing the bulk of the water testing in the main business district on July 16, 17, 19 & 20.

Education: Jenifer Rosette had to reschedule her Streamside Ecology Workshop due to the weather. The new date for the workshop is August 7th. Bob Gilson will be away, so Peg Munves will handle logistics.

Planning Board: Bob Gilson had nothing to report.

CSC: Steve Powers said that solar panels would be installed on the Town Hall by the end of the month – weather permitting. Steve reported that 720 pounds of batteries have been recycled to date, including 499 batteries collected by students at the high school. The Bike Repair Program received 22 bikes last week, and there are currently about 80 bikes in the inventory. We need to find a place to distribute some of them; liability insurance and a lack of helmets are an issue. Steve said that he had attended a workshop and that the Columbia County Land Conservancy is proposing developing a county-wide conservation plan.

Wastewater Treatment Plan: The application is currently being written with Lamont. The first step is water testing. We have to demonstrate a need – that would mean water contamination issues in the central business district. While there is currently not a problem with PFOAs, it was noted that Environmental Advocates of New York are advocating for much lower levels. The DOH is on board, but the State has not weighed in yet.

Hazard Mitigation Plan: Steve said that the Hazard Mitigation Plan is currently on hold. He is waiting for information from the county.

Open Space Inventory: There is funding available, but the application deadline was July 12. It was agreed that we would wait until next year to apply, but the index needs to be completed by 2025.

Natural Resource Conservation Plan: What are the resources that need to be protected in New Lebanon? We should certainly be looking at the Springs, the Shaker Swamp, Mount Lebanon, and the aquifer. Given that the Route 20/22 corridor passes through a significant part of the aquifer, and that there are nearly 200 stakeholders, it may be impossible to find a way to protect the aquifer.

The next CAC Meeting is scheduled for August 14, 2023 at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall. The meeting adjourned at 7:37 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Robert Gilson