

East Greenbush Conservation Advisory Council
DRAFT Meeting minutes
March 28, 2022

Attendees

Members: Jennifer Dean (JD), Chair; Jennifer Hixon (JH); Adam Tobey (AT); Victoria Manieri (VM)

Secretary: Terri Romano (TR)

Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of February 28, 2022, JD moved, VM seconded, were unanimously approved.

Term reappointments

- AT would like to continue for a two year; JD will continue; VM and JH will continue for another year;
- VM mentioned that the law says we could have non members as well
- Try to get more numbers

Business item updates

- Planning Board March 9th 27 lot Rysedorph development; was approved in 2018; VH wanted to bring to our attention in case we have something to do.
- Carver Court traffic was discussed
- Town Board meeting this Wednesday about Solar businesses; JD will attend and take notes
- Annual report has been posted and updated to webpage
- Move June meeting to the 20th

Action Items

- JD to call Jack to see if we could possibly get another member
- Look into TR getting paid
- JD and VM to work on tree species list
- Everyone take a look at the wetlands ecode
- Add links to sites and documents discussed
 - USDA Forestry Inventory Methods:
<https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov/OpenNonWebContent.aspx?content=42554.wba>
 - Cornell/DEC Creating Conservation Overlay Zoning:
https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/overlayzones.pdf

Zoning Committee updates

- AT will be attending; solar and Columbia Turnpike are being discussed

Projects for CAC review

- JH liked changes to Immanuel Church; JD liked the addition of the NA column
- VM suggested Italicize, comment...something to set it apart.
- AT suggested indent and make note

JD makes a motion to send to Board for approval; AT seconds; JD will make a template cover letter; JH moves to send to Board after revisions; motion approved.

Carver Court

- JD and VM marked all trees to be saved from clear cutting;
- Did see signs of emerald ash borer; AT suggested that we could add language stating what trees could be removed
- Tree species recommendations to send to the board; JD and VM both have lists
- VM pulled a list of trees that are good for partially shade tolerant; height; soil conditions;
- Units close to the wetlands and units away from the wetlands
- VM and JD are going to go back and forth with email about trees

Discussions

- Guest (Joe) grows trees; suggested the Town create a tree inventory (left card with VM)
- Vegetation guide
- Wetlands ecode transition - try to address in the next three or four months into the code and take a stab at the initial changes; what changes can be made to the code; one would be to simplify it;
- AT attended the webinar on how to provide more regulatory zoning guide; brief overview of the document and use it as a resource; AT believes it will be coming up in the Zoning update committee; AT will advise what is useful for us
- Critical environment is a designation that is adopted by the town; a conservation zone is when you draw a buffer around that area and you say it's an overlay zone where there are separate regulations. Two communities are going to be selected. AT recommended conservation overlay zoning.
- AT and JH will volunteer to help with application
- Northern long ear bats are being listed under ESA; recommend to avoid tree cutting during April 1 and October 31.
- Tree sale JD was going to call Saratoga that have red oak and ninebark; suggested we buy something to protect the tree from deer; schedule to order for next year; AT thinks its a fun project for students to help CAC
- Guest says check with Rensselaer County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Guest also said Riverside Avenue has an environmental center/classroom

Wrap-up/Review action items

- Critical environmental areas; any documents been generated and adopted? NRI just passed 2019 pre pandemic; develop a critical environmental plan; open area plan; one is preserved; one non interest; foundational resource this is an area we are concerned about; research item for AT how communities take their NRIs; VM talked about a guide to creating an NRI; is there a version online? Hudson River may have a resource and scenic Hudson
- Terms - we should consider this organization is a year old and knowledge transfer; transferable instruction booklet
- Automating processes; this particular oak with this diameter should be saved; create a template so that any tree this size should always be saved; automating means no oversight; can we add a new column to the vegetation sheet;
- Guest suggested to talk to the Town of Colonie; they have strict set of rules; they have to hire an arborist; JD will reach out to Niskiyuna and JH will reach out to Colonie;

Open Discussion- David Terpening

- Guest discussed Nancy's plans from last meeting; why did she come here first before the planning board; CAC members explained that is one of the roles the CAC plays for developers. They can talk through ideas with the Council for ways to protect natural resources on site before getting too far into the planning stage.
- PRT - project review team
- Guest brought up the discussion of trees; is there an inventory of the trees that are taken down? The CAC was not aware of one.
- Zoning committee talking about Columbia Turnpike; natural resources that live in businesses behind Columbia Turnpike - e.g. Hoffmans Car Wash vacuum noise; more concerned about the front of the house and not the back of the house
- LLCs are a handful of people that own the properties on Columbia Turnpike
- AT talked about how CAC can help with lighting, insects; but not cosmetic;
- When you make recommendations they are put into action. Is there any mechanism to see if what CAC recommends get resolved?
- JD likes his comment about keeping track of whether or not our recommendations have been adapted
- Applications for development...SEQR. Historical locations? How do you address that? Lack of information doesn't mean no historical artifacts. Based on observation. Map 25 of inventory is about historical sites.

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned 8:49 p.m.