

**Town of East Greenbush  
Conservation Advisory Council**

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**Conservation Advisory Council monthly meeting**

September 27, 2021 - 7 PM

East Greenbush Town Hall

Community Room

**Attendees**

Members: Jennifer Dean (JD), Chair; Fred Henson (FH); Jennifer Hixon (JH); Adam Tobey (AT)

Also present: Adam Yagelski (AY), Director of Planning

**Call to order**

JD called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. The minutes of the August 23, 2021 meeting were unanimously approved. JH volunteered to be the recorder for the meeting.

**Reports of Board agendas/minutes**

- Project Review Team (PRT): AY reported that two projects were discussed at the 9/27 meeting, neither of which warranted CAC involvement.
- Town Board (TB): FH reported that the TB at its 9/15 meeting passed several resolutions of interest to but not requiring input from the CAC. The resolutions were:
  - A Resolution Scheduling a Public Hearing on the Dunn Landfill's Application for an Enhanced Renewal Operating Permit for 9/29 - primarily an opportunity for affected citizens to voice their concerns.
  - A Resolution Setting Forth that the Application for Major Site Plan Approval for the "Town Center" Planned Development District (PDD) Phase 1 by 580 Columbia Turnpike, LLC is Consistent with the SEQRA Determination the Town Board Issued on January 2, 2020 for the PDD.
  - A Resolution to Approve the Application for Major Site Plan Approval for the "Town Center" Planned Development District (PDD) Phase 1 by 580 Columbia Turnpike, LLC.
- Planning Board (PB): AT reported the following items of interest from September PB meetings:
  - In the discussion of the major site plan Phase I for 580 Columbia Turnpike, it was noted that there will be an allocation of \$25K for improvements to nearby Grant Park.
  - In the PB's deliberation on the proposal for a residential 13 kW photovoltaic array at 12 Lashway Lane, there was much conversation about options for screening vegetation. AT suggested that the CAC create an East Greenbush-specific vegetative plan for future projects. Applicants frequently ask, "what do you want us to plant?" The CAC could prepare a list of suitable native plantings and local nurseries from which to source them. AY confirmed that it would indeed be a useful resource for the Town. JD added this idea to the "CAC Running list of things to do" document on the shared Google drive folder. JH asked if it was too late to advise on the Lashway Lane project. AY said it is not too late and offered

to send the CAC the Planning and Zoning Department's recommendations to review.

- Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA): JD said that no items on the ZBA's agendas seemed to warrant CAC involvement.

### **Business items updates**

- Solar Assessment
  - Submitted Solar Assessment to Town Board on 9/17/21. Hope it will be a useful resource in planning and evaluating solar development. A living document, as new information is always coming out. CAC happy to provide input to TB and PB as they work on the solar law. AY said first step will be to pass moratorium on solar development while the solar law is revised. JD noted that Ian Latimer from NYSERDA advises municipalities on solar development and offered to come to East Greenbush to meet with Town officials. AY said a conference call with Ian when EG is further along could be useful. Challenge will be finding tools to address implementation - NYSERDA input could be very valuable on this.
  - Review of process of writing solar assessment. Helpful features:
    - Solid outline to start
    - Divvying out work among committee members
    - Special meeting to organize final push
    - Overall editing to streamline report
    - "We just have to do it" attitude
    - Might be helpful to negotiate timeline if possible on future projects
  - Question - is Google chat subject to public meeting law? Or is it analogous to email? Send question to Lisa O'Brien, who will bring it to Jack Conway's attention.
- Budget discussion
  - Submitted budget proposal to Jack Conway and Meaghan Hart
  - Jack called to say he was putting down \$5,000 for CAC for FY 2022 - encouraging us to think big. If there are projects that require more funding, talk to him. We do not need an itemized list at this point, which gives us the freedom to develop our program thoughtfully. Great starting point, shows Town support.
  - Budget brainstorming:
    - Jack said we could have secretarial help during the meeting at \$75/meeting (\$900/year)
    - Victoria has suggested event at Red Barn
    - Zotero \$20/year for 2G; \$60/year for 6G; \$120/year for unlimited storage
    - ESRI license will be billed before new FY - in fact, bill was received today - have to decide whether Planning and Zoning Department or Supervisor's Office should keep those files.
    - Vegetation plan printing
    - GIS expertise
    - Revisit ideas in [Natural Resources Work Group - Recommendation to Town Board, May 8, 2019](#)

- Scholarship for HS student to encourage youth involvement
  - JD created a “Budget - brainstorming” document in the Google shared folder and invited members to add to it.
  - AY will ask Meaghan Hart to advise CAC on how to request funds
- Esri update
  - JD received email saying account can be activated
  - AT wonders under whose name and email address the account should be created - his, or the general CAC email, or a Town of EG employee?
  - AY advised meeting with ESRI account rep to get advice.
  - Keep AY in the loop so the information is institutionalized.
- Website
  - JD working with Meaghan Hart to move NRWG content under CAC heading and remove NRWG from top level drop-down
  - AT to be trained to edit website - will follow up with Meaghan after budget season

### **Projects for review**

- Best Rd Solar project proposal
  - Completion of packet postponed because of work on Solar Assessment
  - Once complete, send to Planning Board but loop in Planning and Zoning Department
  - Confer with head of Planning Board on how to incorporate CAC feedback on proposals, when to talk to applicant, etc. AY suggested that standard report on proposed development could include an “issues to consider” section that could expand or contract to incorporate CAC feedback as required.
  - For now, CAC input will be included on a case-by-case basis as we work out standard process
- Carver Court
  - Carver Court is a proposed cluster subdivision on Thompson Hill/upper Mannix Road. Developer must leave 50% of land open, including 20-30% of the buildable area. The open space should be primarily for the benefit of the development’s residents, not the general public.
  - AY showed CAC members maps of the proposed development. AT pulled up NRI maps of the area, as well as satellite imagery on Pictometry. The team noted that the area appeared more forested in satellite imagery than the NRI maps indicated, and agreed that a site visit would be very valuable. AY said he would arrange a site visit for interested members of the CAC and PB.
  - Carver Court is likely the first of several developments on Thompson Hill, and it may be desirable to preserve open space corridors between the developments.
  - The team discussed options for the open space that would maximize conservation values and residents’ enjoyment within the constraints of the development plan. AY will send CAC pertinent sections of cluster subdivision law.
  - The developers are willing to meet with the CAC to hear their recommendations on best use of open space allotment. Developers want to clear the land before winter sets in.

**PMI Hours for Impact**

- Team agreed to let JH submit CAC volunteer hours to Project Management Institute's "Hours for Impact" project in support of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

**Assignments**

	Minutes	Recorder	PRT	ZBA	PB	TB
October	Jennifer H	Adam T	Jennifer D	Adam T	Fred H	Jennifer H
November	Adam T	Fred H	Fred H	Jennifer H	Victoria M	Jennifer D
December	Fred H	Jennifer H	Jennifer H	Victoria M	Jennifer D	Adam T

**Public Comment**

- None

**Adjournment**

- Meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm.