

**East Greenbush Conservation Advisory Council**  
**DRAFT Meeting minutes**  
**April 25, 2022**

Attendees

Members: Jennifer Dean (JD), Chair; Jennifer Hixon (JH); Adam Tobey (AT); Victoria Manieri (VM); Fred Henson (FH)  
Secretary: Terri Romano (TR)

**Chair called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.**

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of March 28, 2022 AT motioned, VM seconded, were unanimously approved.

Business item updates

- Term appointments everyone agreed to stay on.
- JD is going to reach out to Jack about a new member.
- JD draft solar law is being amended currently.
- June meeting is going to be June 20 and not June 27 (has been updated on calendar). VM to take minutes on that day. (Terri is out)
- Hudson River Estuary Program: Ingrid is shifting her focus to lower Hudson region. We now have Christine Vanderland as a representative.

Zoning Committee updates

- Adam: next meeting is June 6th at 6:30. Last meeting focused on Route 9/20. Nothing specific to conservation.
- One goal of the zoning update is to ensure that the majority of future development occurs on routes 9/20 and 4. AT agrees with this assessment and with the overall trajectory of the Zoning update so far.
- Zoning committee meetings are very broad currently, what does the town of East Greenbush look like, should it feel like. Best practices for downtown natural integration. We should have x amount of trees for x distance so we can give specifics. Not opposed to the idea of drafting what a good downtown would look like. Bring that vision to life.
- Adam believes next meeting is on Route 4
- The committee wants to have specific business districts. Hampton Manor, 4 and 9/20. Drawing businesses into those areas.
- Ideas for sustainability themes in developed areas: Putting restrictions on 9/20, two lanes, lower speed limit. Narrow the road. Porous concrete.
- Crosswalks were discussed
- VM asked whether there was any discussion about smaller businesses.
- Discussion about food trucks. One view from zoning meeting is wouldn't be fair to our local restaurants. Perhaps a park as central feature of town for food trucks.

- VM landscaping best practices for the commercial areas. Could that be fixed into zoning. Pull from vegetation guide. Keep soil typing available.
- Yellow flags outside to reflect pesticides. No green what is green has poison.
- Greenlawn alternatives: Town residents who would like to see a compiled resource for what they could or should use instead. . Perhaps bring in East Greenbush garden club through the East Greenbush library
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- VM asked about Building style and keeping character of what used to be here. AT inclusive. VM asked if it would be helpful to have a list with similar styles. AT asked what style are we trying to preserve.
- JD liked the storefront in front towards road and parking in back concept.

### Projects for CAC review

- Immanuel did get the checklist and hopefully it will include elements of CAC review
- JD will try and get cover letters for Carver and Immanuel
- Tree species recommendation list. Manageable for Carver. AT likes it as a spreadsheet. VM added shrubs to the list.
- Requirements said needed a tree per yard per unit. They are going to want other plants and shrubs.
- Homeowners association might want to see it. More aesthetically pleasing to entice homeowners.
- Natives can handle anything...for the most part. Dry and moist. Poor conditions.
- Red Maple this is what was there to begin with. Because of this we have left it off the list. JD is fine with adding it back in.
- FH said Red Maple can be aggressive and get into pipes if planted in wrong spot. He will investigate this further. Might be relevant to any tree with lateral roots as opposed to deep taproots.
- Talk to local places that might have these trees, shrubs for sale.
- VM specifically double checked and everything on the tree list is native for Rensselaer County
- Upcoming possible projects: solar proposal for Morner road is not an application because of the moratorium. JD to share the site but has not looked at the documents yet. Can't submit the application until after the moratorium.
- Possible projects: 500 Units Grandview Drive/Potter property.
- Green Renewables/American need to take a look and Adam will call when could potentially be developed
- Upcoming PRT proposed gas station. AT would suggest not putting it next to a water body.
  - Class C secondary contact, swimming, fishing. Most water bodies are C.

### Action Items

- JD will try and get cover letters for Carver and Immanuel
- FH is checking on utility conflicts for trees for sewage
- JD Check with Adam on next steps for planting recommendation for Carver Court
- JH to do a look up; paste values, ready to share; spreadsheets
- AT will ask at UAlbany program to see if students might want to take on GIS project for the CAC; host a workshop.
- Add links to sites and documents discussed
  - USDA Forestry Inventory Methods:  
<https://directives.sc.gov.usda.gov/OpenNonWebContent.aspx?content=42554.wba>
  - Cornell/DEC Creating Conservation Overlay Zoning:  
[https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation\\_hudson\\_pdf/overlayzones.pdf](https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/remediation_hudson_pdf/overlayzones.pdf)
- JD has been trying out Trello for CAC to-do lists. Can share with group.

### Discussions

- Conservation overlay NRI maps and highlight areas that are critical environmental areas (CEA). Or areas of extra protection. Define the things you are going to be dealing with before you deal with them. Take a step back and sit down and have a workshop and go from map to map and see what areas are critical. A map of where we have defined as critical areas, with interior forest. Then the map can get adapted by the Town Board and if there is a CEA, it will trigger an additional review. Not in our wheelhouse and let someone else deal with it.
- Developing an open space plan. Components of one. Amenities plan from 2016 and the NRI. Could take on without a consultant. Depending on legal review may or may not hold public workshops. Have to run past legal team. Back burner thing.
- JD asked if we could do a spatial analysis of relevant NRI layers.
- Solar Law Draft; AT added zoning titles; JD talked to Adam and Anna. If they could have a draft by tomorrow so they could work with it and then we have another month
  - When zones change we need to know when, what has been assigned to each zone.
  - The tree clearing threshold of 0.5 acres may be too strict
  - Maybe we could say if it's over a certain amount then you need to bring in an arborist to do a forest inventory
  - Make suggestions to limit it or get an explanation why they are listed. Lighting, traffic lights, parking plan
  - Vegetation management sections. You need to submit a plan separated by a landscape within systems and Screening.
  - Maybe state level funding can be sourced for solar vegetation. Can it be written into the law? No certification process for clean fill.
  - Offer services for us to dig into but don't expand; JD will send it out tomorrow. (Solar Law revisions)
- Battery draft law is targeted to emergency response. Some management language from the solar law. Battery law comments by next Tuesday, May 3, 2022.

- Wetlands law. AT was impressed. Fines should be adjusted for inflation. Activities requiring permit exceptions not a huge issue but he doesn't know the legal definition of aquaculture. JH wondered about publishing laws being that newspapers are basically extinct.
  - Ingrid sent an email to Adam Y about wetlands law. There is no intent section, town can update map, hydric soils. Application process needs an overhaul
  - Town law wetlands edit it and treat it like the solar law and share marked up copy with Ingrid.
  - Create a combined map of hydric soils, wetlands, Deadline for comments before May 23, 2022 meeting.
- Vegetation guide do we want to make it non editable and link it to the website. FH is going to check on trees. Depending on what he finds depends what steps need to be taken. Maybe a general guidance thing.

### New Business

- JH still looking into Colonie tree inventory; Colonie CAC has been flipped
- FH US fish and wildlife is in the process of streamsmart workshops. One in the northeast this fall.

### Public Comment - David Terpening:

- He is surprised he is the only one that attends these meetings. Morner road solar project; 80 acres of land. Look on company website and large solar farms is not pretty. Only interest is to make a profit.
- Nuclear fusion
- 9/20 meeting; some are very vocal

### Adjournment

- JD made a motion; FH seconded; Meeting adjourned 9:29 p.m.