

**Town of East Greenbush
Conservation Advisory Council**

TOWN HALL, 225 COLUMBIA TURNPIKE, RENSSELAER, NY 12144 (518)477-2005 FAX (518)477-2386

Conservation Advisory Council monthly meeting

May 23, 2022 - 7PM
East Greenbush Town Hall

Approved Meeting minutes

Attendees

Members Jennifer Dean (JD), Jennifer Hixon (JH), Adam Tobey (AT), Victoria Manieri (VM)
Secretary: Terri Romano

Chair called the meeting order at 7:09 p.m.

Review and approve meeting minutes:

The minutes of April 25, 2022 AT motioned, VM seconded, minutes were unanimously approved.

Business items updates:

- PRT met tonight regarding 164 Columbia Building.
- Planning board meeting for solar law amendments
- Looking to recruit additional CAC members this summer. Should we be looking for a particular skill set? Adding additional members what do we do if it's an even number of votes? How do we proceed with tie votes?
- JD attended NYSERDA webinar on NYS Model Solar law update. Tier 3 up to 5mw or 40 acres. Tier 4 5mw and up. 100-200 homes can be powered per MW.
- AT will be attending webinar about living with water. Creating water resilient living experiences.
- JD - Town website updated to remove Natural Resources Working Group tab. All NWRG and NRI content available through links on the CAC webpage.
- VM reached out to FoodScraps 360 to set up phone conference re: food scraps. 360 is an organization which takes scrap food waste and makes compost out of it. Currently have option where people can pay to participate and have pilot programs with the City of Albany and Troy. Foodscraps 360 is coming up with options for drop off sites and is interested in setting up options for more suburban and rural communities.

Zoning Committee Update

- June 6 meeting is about Route 4

Projects for CAC review

- CAC assessment packets for Immanuel Church and Carver Court were sent to planning office.
- JD made up a cover letter template for everyone to review. JH commented that it was very complete.
- JD checked with Adam and Anna to see how to proceed next. The planning zoning office will send the packets to planning board, applicant and other parties involved.
- Asked Adam how CAC can be triggered by items CAC need to be on the lookout for. Planning zoning department or planning board.
 - Critical Environmental Areas (CEA) layer would make those first priority
 - Proximity to wetlands might slip through the cracks. Certain acreage is definitely a starting point.
 - EAF is a low hanging group we could add that component so that it is triggered to come to us.
- Tree species recommendation list. Adam said it would be best with some kind of planting document such as size or age of tree. Local tree suppliers having a list available.
 - VM is going to touch base with Fred about shrubs. Is there any general guidance from other groups?
 - JD talked to Niskayuna council and they have a good resource.
 - Adam said to send it to the planning board and then on to developers.

Action Items

- Add webinars attended to running list document
- Make an appointment for January meeting about tree ordering.

Discussions

- Solar Law Draft. Submitted it back to PZD. They did have less strict parking and lighting plans.
 - Landscaping, screening the ascetics and native pollinating plants.
 - Version 5 will be sent to the planning board and will most likely be open for public comment. Does Adam want more suggestions from us? Public hearing June 8 for the draft solar law. JD is attending.
- Battery Draft law is being circulated but CAC has no revisions to that at this point.
- Wetlands law we will make an editable copy and add comments to document. AT and JH to open it for everyone to comment.
- Tree councils. JH Town of Colonie has a law on the books which says that planning board is empowered to require that all trees be left standing in areas of proposed development and no live tree exceeding three inches in diameter should be cut down.
 - inventory is good for disasters so you know what to replace.
 - JD talked to Niskayuna about their tree council. Niskayuna has CAC and a tree council. Duties are to review development plans and look for “trees of significance”. Determine what a tree of significance is. They do have discretion to say what should be significant. They held a tree giveaway - 300 trees were given to residences. Carol Kerry said that smaller trees were more popular and

- did provide planting instructions. Wrapped them in wet newspaper and plastic bags. Don't get hung up on deer eating the seed.
 - VM spoke with someone from another CAC regarding memorial trees. VM to talk to parks department regarding memorial trees. Town of East Greenbush doesn't have anything regarding this.
- JD calendar email accounts on website. Put reminders on the calendar and everyone can share. Add agenda items to the calendar.
 - JH do they have planners versus Trelia? JH is going to ask Colleen about computer issues and questions.
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- Catch basin and markings tags to let people know they are there. Allows people to know not to dump oil and other contaminants; they could kill species. Adam thought that CAC would want to look into and help residents with these. AT suggested maybe we look into high school science students to help.
 - JH will be contact for Catch basin markings.
- East Greenbush club was selling seedlings. Make contact with the club and let them know we are here.
- Conservation overlay AT spoke with director at Ualbany about projects for the semester project. Phone conversation if the intent of the program is to come up with a legal document they have special consideration if students are involved in this. It's a trigger for the review process.
- Vegetation guide
- AT looked into other CAC and advisory boards where all members come and meet. NYSACC was established in 1971 by DEC indent non for profit organization. There is a fee \$75 for member. Region 4 has nine counties Albany, Rensselaer, Greene, Columbia. This could be very useful for us to see what others are doing. What do you get out of being a member? A regular meeting construction, talk about what's going on and a discussion. Could be useful.

Public Comment

- David Terpening commented about the agenda format. Very summary in nature; if more specific it might be more appealing to the public.
 - Solar law is being sent around. Loophole that if you limit a developer to do 25 consecutive acres.
 - Solar law discussion about where they may be anticipated solar arrays in and no one seems to have a handle on where these solar developments are going to come in in East Greenbush. How many acres will be allowed? Misleading to the public
 - AT suggested CAC could draw up a map for potential solar farms siting.
 - First light project in North Greenbush might be being pushed over into East Greenbush.
 - CAC to look back into system acreage
 - CAC to look into pilot programs
 - Mobile food vendors

- Poor drainage on Hillview; open ditch and sewage is going into the catch basin.
- Boy Scouts volunteer groups

Motion adjourn

- AT makes a motion to adjourn. VM seconded. Meeting adjourned 8:23 p.m.