



Conservation Advisory Council 2022 Annual Report

Report approved by the Conservation Advisory Council on February 27, 2023

In 2022, its second year of operation, the East Greenbush Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) continued to advise Town government, residents, and developers on ways to preserve natural and cultural resources as the town grows.

Development Project Review

Advised by the Town Planner, the CAC monitored meetings of the Town Board, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Project Review Team for items of significance to the Town's natural resources. The CAC completed reviews, with recommendations, on the following projects:

- Iroquois Place/Nancy Kupiec (informal review and advice to developer)
- Immanuel Church (formal review and recommendations to Planning Board and developer)
- Mountainview/E.W. Birch Builders (formal review and recommendations to Planning Board and developer)
- Carver Court (native planting suggestions, mature tree inventory, advice on wetland protection, and tree best management practices guide for developer)
- Morner Road Solar Project (review and comment to Town Planner)
- Old Troy Rd Bridge (in response to public comment, queried state fisheries database. Found that between 1991 and 2011, Mill Creek had become less favorable to trout, with local insect forage and minnow scores lower, water temperature and conductivity higher.)

East Greenbush Zoning Update Steering Committee

A member of the CAC serves a liaison to the East Greenbush Zoning Committee, attending monthly meetings and advocating for the protection of natural and historic resources in all zoning update discussions and decisions.

Local Law Commentary

The CAC reviewed the following town laws:

- Amendments to Portions of the Solar Energy Law Governing Large-Scale Solar Energy Systems and Other Solar Facilities (adopted by Town Board July 20, 2023) - reviewed and presented multiple rounds of comments to the Town Planner and Town boards



- The CAC began internal review of the 1976 East Greenbush local ordinance “Protecting Freshwater Wetlands” with the goal of providing the Town Board with recommendations for updating this local law.

Hampton (Manor) Lake Study and Recommendations

In June, the Town Board passed “A Resolution Authorizing the Conservation Advisory Council to Review and Make Recommendations to the Town Board on the Issue of Restoring Hampton Lake to Good Health.” The CAC has been evaluating the characteristics of Hampton Lake, studying attempts to protect and rehabilitate similar bodies of water in other communities, and developing a series of recommendations, to be presented to the Town Board in 2023.

Working with the East Greenbush Department of Public Works, the CAC has already taken the following direct actions at Hampton Lake:

- Identified clogged stormwater outfalls, which DPW subsequently cleaned and restored to function
- Identified and pulled water chestnut rosettes, and scheduled next year’s pull
- Identified storm drains that feed into the lake, ordered markers, and arranged with Rensselaer County Soil & Water Conservation District to install in June 2023

Natural Resource Inventory Maps

The CAC was granted low-cost access to ArcGIS mapping software through the Esri Conservation Program (ECP). This year, our CAC ArcGIS volunteer administrator uploaded the map layers from the East Greenbush Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) to ArcGIS and began to make the maps more user friendly. In December, working with the Town Planner, we applied for (and were awarded in January 2023) a grant from the Capital District Regional Planning Commission. This grant will provide the technical assistance we need to achieve our goal of making the NRI maps easy to use and update.

Continuing Education and Collaboration

- Attended NYSEDA webinar on NYS Model Solar Law Update
- Attended webinar on Water Resilience
- Met with new regional representative of Hudson River Estuaries Program
- Attended Wild Ones chapter meeting
- Conferred with CACs in surrounding municipalities on tree programs
- Joined the New York State Association of Conservation Commissions
- Met with CDRPC about Climate Smart Communities about ways for East Greenbush to be more involved with this state incentives program

Members and Meetings

In 2022, the CAC held 11 public meetings, with minutes posted here:

www.eastgreenbush.org/agendas-minutes/conservation-advisory-council/minutes



The volunteer members of the CAC were:

- Jennifer Dean, Chair
- Fred Henson
- Jennifer Hixon
- Victoria Manieri
- Adam Tobey

The CAC is still seeking [volunteer members](#). Persons residing within the Town of East Greenbush who are interested in or have specific skills and training relative to preservation of natural resources, open space conservation and the improvement of environmental quality are eligible for appointment as a member of the CAC.

All are welcome at our meetings, which generally occur on the 4th Monday of every month. In accordance with the public meetings law, the CAC posts its [agendas](#) and [minutes](#) on the Town website.

For more information, please see the CAC webpage at <https://www.eastgreenbush.org/board-committees/conservation-advisory-council>.