

Conservation and Sustainability Advisory Committee

Approved Minutes of April 12, 2018 meeting

Present: Roxanne Marino, Don Ellis, Bara Hotchkiss, Robert Oswald, Sue Poelvoorde, Brice Smith

Excused: Andy Hillman

Roxanne called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. Roxanne noted that Bara informed her that she would be arriving late so Roxanne would like to re-order the agenda to discuss the zoning update work when Bara arrives. The committee agreed to the change.

Approval of Minutes

Roxanne submitted the draft minutes for the January 3rd, January 11th, and February 15th meetings for review and approval. Robert moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Don seconded. Approved.

Updates on Town issues or Board actions related to Sustainability/Conservation

● Town staff and personnel

Roxanne shared personnel changes happening including Darby Kiley, Ulysses Town Planner, taking a planner position with Tompkins County and consultant David West of Randall & West taking a planner position with Tompkins County.

Roxanne also shared that Town Board member Nancy Zahler would be away for five weeks. Roxanne noted that Nancy also serves as the Deputy Supervisor assisting Liz on daily operations, so Liz has been very busy trying to manage all the activities.

The Town's Zoning Officer position will be filled temporarily by Matt Johnson, the Village of Trumansburg's Zoning Officer.

● Solar Law

Roxanne reported that she attended a training on March 17th put on by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets that included a session on recommendations for siting alternative energy facilities relative to farmlands. The information shared at this training would be helpful to the Town in finalizing an update of the Solar Law. Roxanne will share the information with the group as we may want to amend our recommendations on the law that we submitted to the Town Board.

● Tompkins County Environmental Management Council (TC EMC) Unique Natural Areas Presentation (March 15, 2018)

Roxanne reported out on the meeting held by the TC EMC to share information on updates being made to the Tompkins County's Unique Natural Areas Inventory. Tompkins County has created a new map for wetlands including other areas beyond the Federally and State designated sites. Roxanne noted that while the County's UNA designation does not afford a site protection without being designated as a critical environmental area by the Town, the information is very useful in guiding a town's planning and zoning responsibilities. Liz Thomas has pulled together some information on what is required for designating CEA's and is happy to forward then to anyone interested in looking further into doing this for UNA's in our town.

● Water quality and lake protection activities in the Cayuga Lake Watershed

Roxanne noted that the group had requested to have Darby Kiley attend our meeting to share with us information and groups working to collect information on water quality in the area. Since Darby is leaving town employment that meeting will not happen, although Darby might be able to attend a meeting in her new position with Tompkins County.

Roxanne noted that there are a number of groups, both local and statewide, working on water quality concerns for the Finger Lakes. She noted that the Community Science Institute is holding an information session on Saturday, April 14th, 1:00 p.m. at the SPACE at Greenstar to present on Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs.)

Roxanne also shared that the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) established a fund for septic system replacement for target areas with water quality issues. Cayuga Lake is a targeted area. The fund is a 50% match grant program that will fund a replacement project up to \$10,000. The County is earmarked for \$150,000. A plan will need to be developed to determine how that money will be allocated for projects, the County is in the negotiation stage with the EFC.

New Business

Roxanne reported that with respect to the next two agenda items, reports prepared by the team at Cornell Cooperative Extension working with Tompkins County and the Towns to meet Clean Energy Community and Climate Smart Community standards, the Town Board requests that our committee review the reports and provide comments/changes that should be made before the Town Board accepts and adopts the two documents. She noted that while the documents appear to be final, they are drafts. Roxanne asked members to review the documents and be prepared to discuss them at the next meeting on April 25th.

- Natural Resources Inventory for the Town of Ulysses
 - Greenhouse Gas Inventory for the Town of Ulysses (municipal)

 - Clean Energy Community (CEC) Grant for Town Hall – Replacement of heating and AC system with heat pumps, funding awarded and next steps.
- Roxanne shared that the Town did receive the grant to replace the heating and AC system in the Town Hall. The draft contract with NYSERDA is being negotiated. She thanked the committee, and particularly Brice, for helping pull together information for the grant application that resulted in our project being selected. Once a contract is in place, the next step will be to hire an engineering firm to study the project and prepare bid documents for contractor bidding. The first installment of the grant will be \$25,000. The Town has set up a project team of Liz Thomas, Supervisor; Tom Myers, Code Enforcement Officer; Michael Boggs, Town Board member; and Roxanne Marino, Chair, CSAC. Brice is interested in serving on the project team; Roxanne will share Brice's request with Liz and thanked Brice for being willing to participate.

Updates on Town issues or Board actions relate to Sustainability/Conservation - continued

- Report on work of the Zoning Update Steering Committee (ZUSC) and Zoning Law Revision Status and Timeline

Roxanne reported that the Town needs to finalize the update to the Zoning Law for the Agriculture, Jacksonville and Mixed-Use zones. The Town has already received two extensions on the grant from NYSERDA, making it highly unlikely that a third extension would be granted. If the work is not completed, the Town could be out the \$40,000 grant reimbursement. The Town Board will be sending out information on the timeline they will follow to complete the zoning update task.

Based on comments received at the public information meetings held late 2017 and early 2018, the committee is recommending a different process for determining the number of subdivisions that can occur on a parcel of land, eliminating the maximum residential lot size and keeping the minimum lot size at 2 acres with a minimum of 400-foot road frontage as it exists in the current zoning law. Also, CAFOs will be kept under Special Permit process but, additional guidelines for design standards will need to be developed.

Old Business

Roxanne noted that due to the time, the next two agenda items will be tabled until the next meeting.

- Tools for supporting agriculture and land conservation funding, CSAC subcommittee
- Urban forestry proposal from 2017, possible RFP in 2018

Agenda items for next meeting

- Meeting Schedule

Noting the requested change in meeting days from the 4th Thursday to the 4th Wednesday, Roxanne noted that the next meeting of the CSAC is scheduled for Wednesday, April 25th, 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.