

Conservation and Sustainability Advisory Committee

DRAFT Minutes of January 19, 2017 meeting

Present: Roxanne Marino, Robert Oswald, Andy Hillman, Brice Smith, John Hertzler (liaison)

Excused: Bara Hotchkiss, Sue Poelvoorde, Don Ellis

Call to Order at 7:05 pm

Approval of Minutes 9-15-16, 12-28-2016 minute approved

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

Roxanne reported that John Hertzler was appointed as our committee liaison at the Town Board organizational meeting, and Don Ellis was appointed as a member of the committee.

Old Business

- **Large-scale solar installations in the town**

The documents approved at the committee's 12-28-16 meeting on proposed glare standards and suggested revisions to the Town Solar law (LL#3 of 2015) were sent to the Town Board for discussion; the Board passed the documents to the Planning Board for review and input.

Roxanne attended the Planning board meeting on Jan. 17th; there was a brief discussion of the documents and further discussion scheduled for a future meeting.

The committee discussed our position on solar in the town of Ulysses, consensus feeling was that there is very limited potential to develop large scale solar in Ulysses, but to the extent that we can, we should promote the installation of as much solar as the current configuration would allow. If installation of large solar on prime farm land is prohibited, then we essentially cannot develop even the limited amount allowed by the current grid and substation configuration.

Since it would take up so little land and is, in fact, not incompatible with some types of farming (e.g., grazing of sheep), there is no need to make such a restriction in the short term. This should be reconsidered if significant upgrades are planned to the grid and substations, and the town will have the time to develop a law to encourage solar development while maintaining the character of the town in the meantime. In this way, we can build out to the extent we can now, but still be protected in the future when much more extensive development is possible.

Roxanne noted that Dryden has a draft solar law that has provisions to address concerns about farmland loss and extent of solar buildout.

Roxanne reported on the presentation made by Renovus at the Planning Board meeting, for a 2 MW proposed community solar farm on Rt. 96, adjacent to their property.

There was a brief discussion of PILOTS and the proposal by the Tompkins County IDA for a countywide standard for large scale solar.

- **Zoning update**

ZUSC is still working on the Ag district draft revisions, next meeting is Mon Jan 23rd; open house is tonight, Jan 19th, on Jacksonville zoning revision goals.

- **Urban Forestry Grant Application (NYSDEC)**

Andy explained the timeline and on-line process for making the grant application, and shared his ideas on a project summary, goals and outcomes, and workplan. Andy and Don are willing to do much of the work on the application, if the Board approves going forward. Roxanne will meet with Liz and Darby before the next Town Board meeting to discuss, and request that the Town Board approve going forward with an application. Don and Andy are contacting possible partners for the grant (Fairgrounds board, Village of Trumansburg, other?).

- **Clean Energy Community (NYSERDA)**

Roxanne reported on the TCCOG Energy Task Force meetings she has been attending. Several TC towns, including Ulysses, are actively working to get certified as Clean Energy Communities, and apply for grant money under program. The group is working on defining goals for such a grant, and also on helping towns to understand and meet the CEC requirements (4 out of 10 items). Terrance Carroll from CCE is assisting municipalities. This is a project our committee likely can get involved in as Ulysses moves forward.

Next meeting

- Scheduled for February 16th, 7:00 pm
- Review of overall objectives and possible tasks for the next 3-6 months, other than review and comment on proposed zoning updates and forestry grant, was tabled until a future meeting.

Adjourn at 8:40 pm