

Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon

Minutes for February 11, 2019

New Lebanon Town Hall

Present: CAC members David Farren, Bob Gilson, Peg Munves, Steve Powers, Paul Rix

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. We approved the meeting minutes for January 7, 2019, to be posted on the town's web site by the Town Clerk. We welcomed three new members, all of whom had been appointed by the Town Board at its January meeting to two-year terms on the CAC.

Bob Gilson reported on the Capital District CAC Roundtable he had attended at the Colonie Town Library on a wintry evening in late January. Ingrid Haeckel of the Hudson River Estuary Program (HREP) helped organize the Roundtable and presented. She indicated that the HREP plans to host a seminar on map reading on April 30.

We reviewed the Conservation Forum hosted by Grow the Valley on Saturday, January 12, and agreed that the CAC PowerPoint presented by outgoing member Craig Westcott, assisted by Peg Munves, was received warmly by an appreciative audience. In fact, "It's all about the Shed, Man" was a hit. David Farren operated the computer. Fortunately, Cynthia Creech had arranged a dry run the evening before and a number of complications – a connecting cable for the projector, adequate power cords – were remedied.

David provided an update on the Comprehensive Plan revision. The meeting with Nan Stolzenburg on January 15, attended by Cynthia, David and Ted Salem, covered the full range of issues. Nan suggested various approaches to involve the community. With backing from the Town Board, we may aim for the Hudson Valley Greenway's next grant deadline of May 10.

We discussed the CAC's goals for 2019. Steve Powers volunteered to help with updating the Scenic Resources Inventory and Paul Rix suggested that certain students in the Hands to Work program at Darrow could be dedicated to our work once again. David will reach out to Michelle Bienes, once Peg forwards her contact information, to offer the CAC's assistance with funding conservation-oriented programs for the summer recreation program at Shatford Park. We will all turn our attention to identifying potential Critical Environmental Areas in town. Paul volunteered to attend the next Planning Board meeting if Cynthia is unable to.

Paul raised the issue of how much the CAC can advocate for certain outcomes in local political races. We agreed that our advisory role would be compromised if we were to advocate as a group.

The Zoning Rewrite Committee's recommendations for changes to the zoning ordinances are an item on tomorrow evening's agenda for the Town Board. The special meeting on January 17 resulted in further refinements to the language and focus of several of the suggested changes, including ponds.

The next monthly meeting for the CAC will be Monday, March 11, 2019, starting at 6:30 P.M. at the New Lebanon Town Hall. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by David Farren