

## ***Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon***

Minutes for June 10, 2019

New Lebanon Town Hall

Present: CAC members Cynthia Creech, 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 May 13, 2019, to be posted on the town's web site by the Town Clerk.

The CAC Roundtable has been postponed and rescheduled for October 2. CAC members were unable to attend either workshop on how to use the *Columbia County 2018 Natural Resources Inventory*. One copy has been donated to the Town Library and the Town Clerk's office also has a copy.

Cynthia Creech attended the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting at which Darrow School was cautioned that use variances are seldom granted. Darrow has proposed converting two large hayfields into commercial solar arrays. Current zoning ordinances limit such arrays to commercial zones along U.S. Route 20 and the Darrow fields lay well outside those zones. The CAC is concerned about the impact on wildlife migration. Paul Rix will be leaving Darrow School to join Hawthorne Valley Farm full time.

We discussed Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) in town and identified areas with extensive aquifers, unfragmented forests, cool ravines, riparian corridors with ancient forest patches, and hedge rows on agricultural lands as all worthy of special protection. Aquifers and cool ravines are unusual, necessary habitats while forests, ravines, riparian corridors and hedge rows are critical to wildlife. We plan to finalize our recommendations on CEAs at our next meeting.

David Farren has yet to hear about a town account with Google. He and Steve Powers will update the Scenic Resources Inventory once the town establishes that account.

We began reviewing items in the Action Plan from the *2005 Comprehensive Plan* and will continue the review at next month's meeting. It appears that many action items yet to be accomplished are still valid. Once the revision committee is appointed, the CAC will recommend approaches to revising the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Rewrite Committee (ZRC) will interview interested candidates on Wednesday. Meanwhile, the ZRC's recommended changes to the zoning ordinances still await review by the Town Attorney.

Bob Gilson attended the Planning Board meeting on May 15.

The next monthly meeting for the CAC will be Monday, July 8, 2019, starting at 6:30 P.M. at the New Lebanon Town Hall. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

*Respectfully submitted by David Farren*