



**Town of Poughkeepsie  
Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC)**

**February 25, 2019, 7:30 PM  
Supervisor's Conference Room, Town Hall**

CAC Members present: Pamela Kingsley (Chair), Susan Karnes Hecht, Kerstin Cruger

Guests: Stephanie Lewison, Town of Poughkeepsie Historic Commission  
Beverly Allyn, Town resident  
Observers from Participation in Government Class, Arlington High School

Items for review:

- Tree preservation on Hudson River State Hospital property

Stephanie is not a Town resident (resides in Lagrange) but participates on Town Historic Commission and is involved in redevelopment of HRSH site. She stated that the developer has permission from Town to clear cut southern part of property. Southern section is Phase 1, northern section will be Phase 2. There is interest in cutting now before endangered bat species return to nest. One specific tree, a very old, large "Copper Beech" is located near the old Director's Residence. Stephanie had previously connected with Ann Shershin who is assisting her to liaison with Town on this concern. Ann had reached out to CAC for input since our prior meeting. The tree will be assessed by the town arborist in order to determine if it is worth preserving. Stephanie asks that we remain aware of this process and follow up as well as be aware of the planned cutting. She suggested, and there was agreement, that it would benefit us to tour the site. We agreed that it would be important to reach out to the Planning Board to gain a better understanding of how the decision to cut so many trees was reached. Stephanie noted that the January minutes from the Planning Board have relevant information, available on the site. We acknowledged that we were not yet in existence when these decisions were made, but going forward we will have awareness of this issue and interact with comprehensive plan group about it, in terms of concerns related to the impact of deforestation. Stephanie also noted that the DEC has a "big tree registry" that we can consult, it lists a large "Cucumber" tree in front of the old Administration building which may now be gone.

We would like to know what kind of regulations are currently in place with regard to clear cutting? And how they are enforced? One of our guests (parent of AHS student) stated that local wetlands are not being adequately protected and that rules are often flaunted. She did not provide a specific occurrence.

Pam will reach out to Ann to follow up on this.

- City of Poughkeepsie 2/19/19 presentation on Natural Resources Inventory

Kerstin attended this event and provided a brief overview of their content. They had extensive maps and partnered with Hudsonia for a habitat map. We can ask for the corresponding Town map which provides information about biodiversity. There was discussion about the Fallkill. They did water sampling, a city tree inventory, mapping of the "emerald ash borer" infestation to create an action plan to save/replant trees that are impacted.

What are the lessons that we can take from their experience? We need to take a very serious look at the resources that we already have available for our NRI as previously noted. We need to determine what is missing as well as how old the information is, in order to make a realistic recommendation to the Comprehensive Plan committee regarding what is truly needed.

- Request for letter of support for Vassar Environmental Cooperative

Pam was contacted by Jen Rubbo, Director of the Cooperative, requesting a letter of support for a grant to hire two summer students to work on an invasive species project in the county. They would do educational presentations, we could set up a public meeting with them for residents, best practices, etc. which would benefit the Town as well as give presentations within the Town departments. Jen provided a template letter. A copy of the letter is attached to these minutes.

- Guidelines for CAC actions/recommendations to Town

There is a consensus that we need to gain a better understanding of the protocol for taking an action or making a recommendation. An internal procedural structure is needed. Pam suggested that Nate Nardi-Cyrus at the Hudson River Estuary Program, whose function is to support CACs, would be an excellent resource on this topic. We had hoped he would attend tonight, he was unable to do so but plans to be with us next month and this will be one topic for discussion. We are also inviting Jen Rubbo, and we would like at that meeting to focus on how to start the process of the open space and natural resources inventories. In addition, Susan plans to attend the EMC "CAC Roundtable on 2/27 (snow date 3/7) and hopes to make useful contacts.

New business:

- Susan reported that she was contacted by County Legislator Rebecca Edwards to be in the loop about a possible plan for the County to lease a Town building for a new Hazardous Household Waste drop-off site. The CAC should be aware of this.
- Susan reported that there has not yet been a resolution by the Town Board to form the Climate Smart Task Force. She has been in contact with Ann Shershin (who reached out and wishes to support). Pam will also reach out to Jessica Lopez.
- Pam reached out to Matt Woolever regarding the need for additional CAC members.
- Pam reached out to Wendy Greggs, she will know shortly if she can continue on the CAC.

Adjourned: at 8:45 pm.

Next meeting: March 25, 2019 at 7:30 pm

Minutes recorded by Susan Karnes Hecht  
One attachment

