



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

**March 25, 2019, 7:30 PM
Main Meeting Room, Town Hall**

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

Guest: Nate Nardi-Cyrus

Conservation and Land Use Specialist
Hudson River Estuary Program (HREP)/Cornell University

Business items:

- The primary goal for this meeting was to develop an understanding of the process of creating a Natural Resources and/or Open Space Inventory, and an Open Space Plan.

Nate met previously met with Mike Welti, Director of Municipal Development. Tonight he presented via PowerPoint "Open Space Planning in the Town of Poughkeepsie." He explained the HREP and its key benefits. HREP is programmed through DEC, funded by Environmental Protection Fund. He explained laws governing the CAC and its mission.

There are 3 major steps in this process:

IDENTIFY what you have > PRIORITIZE goals > PLAN, Protect, Manage

Obtaining the NRI is the first step in the process.

IDENTIFY

NRI is essentially a series of maps with accompanying reports and descriptions to interpret them. Nate can provide us with numerous examples in different formats.

Primary areas include (but not limited to): geology/soils, water resources, habitat/wildlife, land use, cultural resources, climate conditions. All of these will be multiple maps – our region has a huge amount of data already, and it is not obsolete. HREP has an online mapper which includes a lot of information. Dutchess County did one in 2010 but we need to add local level data.

We need to understand what the town already has as parts of the NRI.

PRIORITIZE

Based on NRI, develop inventory and map of open areas. This is typically a result of layering, totaling the various maps in some way to identify the most critical and/or feasible areas for preservation.

From this, develop an open space index. This identifies specific parcels which would be prioritized for eventual town acquisition to preserve them.

PLAN

Open space plan includes priorities, justification, and strategy for conserving land – a road map.

* The public must participate, not simply comment, to create buy-in. A professional is very effective in this context to manage activities with the public.

Discussion:

Confer with Mike Welti on the development of the NRI and OSI for the Town of Poughkeepsie. This should include a current outline or overview and an inventory of existing components of mapping. This discussion will allow for a review of materials and also offer an opportunity to evaluate the viability of use toward an Open Space Plan. The CAC would like the opportunity to assess if the NRI/OSI reflects all of the necessary components that should be included. After the presentation at tonight's meeting the commission feels better prepared for this dialog.

In addition, we would like to discuss if there has been consideration of coordinating with City of Poughkeepsie (or other neighboring municipalities) as we will be considered more favorably when applying for grants with a partner. In early summer there will be an opportunity to apply for 2020 to support open space planning.

- Update from CAC Roundtable (took place 3/7 at DCEMC). Susan attended the Roundtable, where other participants were happy to learn of our CAC's existence. It was interesting to see the different activities being done across the municipalities, some are intense and highly developed. The evening included the annual State of the Environment for the County which is available online. Susan hopes to continue attending monthly EMC.
- Susan also 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 Town Board members Ann Shershin and Jessica Lopez and hopes that the Board will address this need in April.
- Pam reported that Wendy Greggs is resigning the CAC for personal reasons. We discussed the need to identify more members.

Adjourned: at 8:45 pm

Next meeting: Scheduled for 4/22, we will confirm availability for this date due to holiday schedule. Possible to change to 4/29 if necessary.

Minutes recorded by Susan Karnes Hecht