

Minutes of the Sept. 3, 2019, Meeting of the Putnam Valley Commission for the Conservation of the Environment

In Attendance: CCE members Mike Usai, chair, Pat Grove, Friedel Muller-Landau, Julie Ruben and Glenn Sapir; Wendy Whetsel, liaison to the Town Board;

Absent: CCE members Mia Azcue, Eileen Reilly

The meeting was called to order at Town Hall at 5:34 p.m by Chair Mike Usai.

Mike invited updates to previous Putnam Valley Commission for the Conservation of the Environment (CCE) business. Mike reported that Pat Grove had reached out to the environmental group at Putnam Valley High School, which is chaired by Nick Lenhard, a teacher. She was seeking two students to serve on the CCE. Selection is in the works.

Mike announced that the Hudson Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) would be holding a forum on Granite Mountain from 1-3 pm on Sunday, Sept. 29, at the Putnam Valley Library

Mike read a press release from the NYS Energy Research & Development Authority (NYSERDA) that announced that it is investing to help home and business owners throughout NY State to upgrade to more energy efficient heating and cooling technology. Through a grant it will conduct a Clean Heating & Cooling Campaign over the next two years in Putnam County. It is looking for volunteers. Training will be offered. For more information, contact Frank@brightenergyservices.com.

Wendy Whetsel, Town Board Member and liaison between CCE and the Town Board, reported that \$500 is in the budget for "Environmental Control" for this year and will be for 2020 as well. That money will cover printing and framing of photos for our Town Day exhibit, as well as a table and banner to be used for display that day and at future events.

Glenn Sapir repeated that he had sent the Eco-tip on Safer Alternatives to RoundUp to Wetlands Inspector Bruce Barber for his review and comments on Aug. 13. Glenn had not heard back from Bruce except to say he would review after his return from vacation.

Mike announced he will invite Karen Doyle of the HHLT to a future meeting to discuss the concept of creating an Open Space Inventory, the logical next step after the CCE had created a Natural Resources Inventory.

Wendy reported on the status of the proposed video on controlling Oriental bittersweet. She stated that Tony Arrien, the town's Community Media Coordinator, is not willing to participate in the project and that linking to the existing video produced by U. of Minnesota Extension and that state's Dept. of Agriculture, with introductory on-camera footage to localize the video, would be the best route to go. She reported that she had spoken to a local videographer who would work with us. Julie Ruben expressed interest in being the on-camera spokesperson for the CCE. Glenn offered to provide some talking points. Now, Wendy and Julie will have to coordinate with the videographer to establish place and date for the videoing.

The discussion on the Eco-tip and the video launched a long discussion about herbicides, including RoundUp. Pat asked if you applying RoundUp directly topically to the stem presents a danger to the environment. Mike said he would refer that question to a friend who is an ecotoxicologist.

Mike said there was no additional information regarding the naturally breached dams off of Spruce Mountain Road that have caused two ponds to dry up. He reported that Bruce Barber has not communicated with him any further on this matter since our last (Aug. 13) meeting.

A few members offered updates on Town Day on Sept. 28. Wendy reported that she had bought a six-foot table, referred to above, for Town Day and future events. Glenn said he can bring two tables, but he would need help carrying them from his car. Mike reported that he had received more than 25 photos from PV citizens who wished to have their wildlife photos considered for the CCE exhibit, What's in Your Backyard. It was expected that we would have more than 50 submissions by the Sept. 10 deadline. Glenn was asked to find out if a photography club existed at the high school, and if there was one, to promote the exhibit to that group. Glenn reported that HHLT will lend us three easels and three maps of our choosing from the NRI for display at Town Day. It was suggested that handouts could be reprints of some of our Eco-tips. Wendy and Julie agreed to meet to select photos, and Pat suggested that we label the name of the photo subject as some kind of a flip-out, so people could guess at the subject of each photo. Mike announced that he had applied for electricity at the booth. Wendy said she can bring an old dressing screen to be used for hanging photos.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

The meeting ended at 6:50 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS:

GLENN—Await Bruce Barber's suggestions and comments on the Eco-tip on herbicides and then send to town webmaster. Offer talking points for Oriental bittersweet video. Pick up three easels and three maps from Karen Doyle. Bring two tables to Town Day. Investigate whether there is a photography club at the high school and make contact if there is.

MIKE—Continue working with Bruce Barber on incorporating the NRI into the revised Master Plan. Invite Karen Doyle to a future meeting to discuss Open Space Inventory. Consult ecotoxicologist about whether RoundUp is transported from plant's roots to surrounding soil if it is applied topically to cut stem.

WENDY—Meet with Julie to judge photos and to discuss video. Line up date and time for videoing with Julie and the videographer. Bring dressing screen to Town Day. Meet with Julie to select photos for our exhibit at Town Day. Twenty selected photos would probably be adequate.

JULIE—Meet with Wendy to discuss video script and arrange for videoing of introduction. Meet with Wendy to select photos (perhaps 20) for What's in Your Backyard exhibit. Sept. 10 is cutoff for submissions.

MIA—Supervise printing and framing of photos for Town Day exhibit. Create fold outs, hiding the name of the photographer and the identity of the subject for each photo. Perhaps Wendy can help with that latter task.

PAT—Await contact from PV HS Environmental Club advisor about student members.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn Sapir, CCE Secretary

