

Minutes of the Oct. 29, 2019, Meeting of the Putnam Valley Commission for the Conservation of the Environment

In Attendance: CCE members Mike Usai, chair, Mia Azcue, Pat Grove, Eileen Reilly, Julie Ruben (via telephone) and Glenn Sapir; Wendy Whetsel, liaison to the Town Board; Guest Karen Doyle, Hudson Highlands Land Trust

Absent: CCE member Friedel Muller-Landau

Chair Mike Usai called the meeting to order at Town Hall at 5:57 p.m.

Karen Doyle of the Hudson Highlands Land Trust presented a full set of enlarged maps from our Natural Resources Inventory (NRI), four binders holding the maps and accompanying reports and a flash drive of the NRI, given to Wendy Whetsel, CCE liaison to the Town Board.

Karen then gave an explanation of an Open Space Inventory (OSI), which is the logical next step that is taken after an NRI is completed. She mentioned that Cornwall will be presenting its OSI to its town board on Nov. 19. She stated that Blooming Grove, also in Orange County, has completed its OSI. She further stated that the Hudson Valley Community Preservation Act allows every community to develop a Community Preservation Plan. She explained that an OSI is really two parts: an inventory of lands that the community wants to see protected; and a map that shows these lands, in the community's levels of priority to protect them, placed in parcels. If we were to pursue developing an OSI for Putnam Valley, Karen recommended that we retain a planner involved in the presentation to the board for an official go-ahead on the project and to guide the CCE through the entire inventory process. If the CCE decides to go ahead with this process, it was recommended that we wait until the new board is installed, so that we would have the support of the government in place at the time that we would undertake the project. A representative of HHLT would accompany us during this presentation, if we would like. Indications are that funding could be available through grants, and we would likely have to file for the grant early next year.

Referring back to the NRI binders that Karen had brought for the CCE, we decided in the past and confirmed that we wished to give one to the Town Board, one to the Planning Board, one to the Library and one to be retained by the CCE. The large maps were to stay in Town Hall for use by the various town agencies and officials involved in planning. Pat Grove volunteered to present to the Library its edition.

The discussion turned to exhibiting the photos hung on Town Day in the library for the months of November and December. Julie Ruben suggested we present the binder at a Meet and Greet we plan to hold at the library, but ensuing discussion discouraged that idea. We must set a date for the reception. For the reception, Eileen Reilly offered to purchase wine, sparkling water and plastic cups. Julie offered to purchase cheese, crackers, fruit, and paper goods. Glenn Sapir agreed to help Mia Azcue hang the photos, and reported he had the "What is it?" cards from Town Day that could be hung with the photos. Glenn and Mia must touch base to arrange a date. Wendy Whetsel suggested that at our Meet and Greet we have a continual loop of the PowerPoint of all photos submitted for consideration for What's in Your Backyard?

There was a discussion on the proposal for a new firehouse next to the ambulance corps HQ. CCE members wished to learn more about the material in the soil. Note: In the days following the meeting, Eileen spoke with Supervisor Oliverio and learned that the material was construction and demolition

debris and that the DEC has been involved in monitoring the soil and has advised the Town to keep the soil in place. The Town might bury it deeper before covering it with fresh material.

Pat inquired of the status of bringing on two students to the CCE. We are apparently waiting on essays from them on why they wish to serve on the CCE. Mike said he would follow up.

Mike has been asked to request past minutes of the Planning Board, so that properly identified requests for wetland waivers can be made. We also wish to be kept current on Planning Board minutes and wetland requests.

Glenn said that he would call Supervisor Oliverio to get the presentation of the NRI binder to the Board on the agenda for the Board's Nov. 20 meeting, which begins at 6 p.m., and at that same meeting request that the Town Board declare Putnam Valley a Climate Smart community. Glenn said he would represent the CCE at that meeting if his schedule allowed it.

The next meeting of the CCE was set for Tuesday, Nov. 19, at 5:30 at Town Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS:

MIKE—Follow up on students interested in joining the CCE. Talk to Michelle Babnik about receiving minutes of past meetings of the Planning Board, as well as continuing to receive current minutes and wetlands requests. Talk with Wendy about setting up a PowerPoint at the library during our Meet and Greet.

MIA—Connect with Glenn to arrange for hanging the photos at the library.

WENDY—Work with Mike on setting up the PowerPoint for the Meet and Greet. Present a binder of the NRI to the Planning Board and make the enlarged maps available to town officials. Lead the effort to set a date for the meet and greet at the library.

JULIE—Purchase cheese, crackers, fruit, and paper goods for the meet and greet.

EILEEN-- Purchase wine, sparkling water and plastic cups for the library Meet and Greet.

Actually, I, that is Glenn, suggest that as this is a CCE event, we try to use paper cups and plates and wooden tableware rather than plastic if possible.

PAT—Present a binder of the NRI to the library.

GLENN—Set a date with Mia to hang photos at the library. Bring “What is it?” cards to possibly hang with photos. Confirm availability to attend Nov. 20 Town Board meeting to present NRI binder and propose that the town become a Climate Smart Community. Get those two actions on the agenda by contacting Supervisor Oliverio.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn Sapir, CCE Secretary