

Minutes, PV Commission for the Conservation of the Environment, 4/20/21

CCE Commissioners present: Mia Azcue, Eileen Reilly (Chair), Julie Ruben, Glenn Sapir, Michael Usai.
Board Liaison: Wendy Whetsel

Meeting began at 6:18

TOWN BOARD UPDATES

Wendy Whetsel announced the upcoming Town Meeting to continue the discussion of the proposed noise ordinance. She reported that the Town Board is the proposed Lead Agency for new solar and agricultural regulations.

OPEN SPACE INVENTORY (OSI)

Julie Ruben presented on the OSI. She met with Nate Nardi-Cyrus of the DEC HREP, learning that the grant cycle was now open and would close at 3pm on June 2nd. An OSI is a large project requiring a great deal of work. Generally they take at least 2 years to complete. Much public input is required (more than for the NRI). During these times, meetings could be conducted outdoors and remotely. OSI grants require 15% in matching funds, which can be in-kind funds.

A Lead Agency is needed, and Hudson Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) is the most reasonable and likely choice. They have received Community Preservation funding which contains an OSI component. The OSI would overlap with their Green Corridors Plan. A partnership with HHLT would demonstrate capacity building. If the HHLT declines (again) becoming the Lead Agency, the CCE should ask them for professional help and guidance. Scenic Hudson and Hudsonia could be candidates for Lead Agency status.

Creating intra and inter-municipal partnerships will help our application, as would a letter of support from the Town Supervisor and/or Board. We should investigate Greenway funding if we don't qualify this year for OSI funding; this requires 50% matching funds, again in-kind.

Nate advises we remain flexible and search for professional help and alternative funding that will lead us towards an OSI.

Julie will contact Ashley and Katrina from the HHLT. Eileen Reilly suggested Julie contact Julie Noble, Kingston's Environmental Manager, for guidance, and will send Julie R the contact info. Eileen also mentioned 7 other available grants—she will send information to CCE members.

HUDSON VALLEY GREENWAY COMMUNITY (HVGC)

Glenn Sapir looked into possible funding via membership in the HVGC. He discovered that Putnam Valley had been accepted as a HVGC member in 2000, which enables us to access grants. Another initiative is becoming Compact Community. Putnam County has pledged to adopt Compact Community tenets; if PV can follow them we will have

access to more funding. Glenn will follow up with the county on the Compact Community.

YORKTOWN SOLAR FARM

Eileen reported a project sign has been placed on the proposed site. Julie confirmed she had sent a letter to the Yorktown Planning Board opposing the project on behalf of the CCE.

RIDGELINE REGULATIONS

Mike Usai has sent the CCE recommendations to Bruce Barber to augment the Steep Slope regulations.

CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS (CEA)

Mike reiterated our understanding that we must limit proposed CEA to 4 or fewer. We must prioritize based on many criteria, including our ability to fully justify our selections. Preserving habitat corridors should be paramount. Mike will propose dates for a CEA meeting to make-up for the cancelled meeting.

PLANNING BOARD (PB)

Eileen attended the PB meeting of 3/15/2021 and will continue her attendance of the twice-monthly meetings.

HISTORIC BARGER BARN at SOCCER CAMP

Wendy reported that the barn needs to be maintained so it does not violate the terms of the permit which allowed for the construction of the new building. SHIPO might get involved. Wendy will follow-up and let us know.

Julie will ask Ed Barger for any documentation he can provide on his great uncle Emmett Barger, who built the barn. She will request a letter of support from him as well. She mentioned that the historic Barger barn at Three Arrows, which has a similar, 2-story design, is a generation older than the decaying barn but has been maintained.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Eileen reported Bill Gouldman is organizing a town cleanup in May. CCE members agreed to participate in their areas.

Putnam County Solid Waste Group is comprised of representatives from each town with Eileen representing PV along with Sam Oliverio. Eileen reported discussions of ways of rethinking waste, and of using signage county-wide to address littering.

Student member Bianca Garcia has created an Instagram account for the CCE and will be posting to it.

NEXT MEETING: May 18th, 6:00 pm

ACTION ITEMS:

Glenn: Follow up on Compact Communities

Julie: Contact HHLT for OSI leadership.
Contact Julie Noble of Kingston

Contact Ed Barger re: historic barn

Eileen: Send Julie contact info for Julie Noble
Share 7 funding sources with CCE

Wendy: Follow up on historic barn

Mike: Propose CEA meeting dates

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Ruben