



**PUTNAM VALLEY
COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF THE ENVIRONMENT
Town Hall, Putnam Valley NY 10579**

MINUTES OF THE 11/18/21 MEETING OF THE CCE

In attendance: Chair Eileen Reilly, Michael Usai, Glenn Sapir, Julie Ruben, Mia Azcue, Liaison to the Town Board Wendy Whetsel and Guest Nate Nardi-Cyrus of the DEC.

Eileen Reilly called the Zoom meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Eileen's audio wasn't loud enough for her to properly run the meeting, so that responsibility was turned over to Wendy Whetsel.

Wendy gave an update on relevant town matters. She reported that 114 homes in Putnam Valley had signed up for community solar. She then reported that the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funds (1 million dollars received by the Putnam Valley Town Board) will be used toward construction and/or improvement of spillways, dams and culverts, among other things. She followed up on a request at last month's meeting and confirmed that the town budget will allocate \$500 to the CCE for expenses. Wendy reported that she and Eileen were thinking of creating a brochure on recycling. Glenn suggested that if it were possible to do so before the new year, we could use this year's budget allocation for the printing.

Wendy turned over the meeting to Nate Nardi-Cyrus, a DEC staffer who had assisted in the CCE's creation of the town's Natural Resources Inventory and was now ready to further advise the CCE on its intention to submit a proposed Critical Environmental Area designation (or more than one) ultimately to the Town Board for adoption. Such a CEA would serve the Planning Board and the Town Board in an advisory capacity to point out valued environmental considerations when considering certain types of development in that designated area.

Nate's advice was to defer to Bruce Barber, the town planner and wetlands inspector, to get his opinion on the merits of the three different areas being considered by the CCE for possible submission. After gaining the insight and support of the town planner, the CCE should make the homeowners and business owners in the proposed CEA aware of the proposal through either a mailing or a public meeting, or both. Nate felt it was probably best to select only one area for initial proposed CEA designation, after conferring with Bruce Barber. Mike Usai volunteered to take the matter up with Bruce, and after receiving Bruce's input, invite him to the next scheduled meeting of the CCE. We will need to get professional mapping of the proposed area(s), and Nate feels he can help secure funding for that aspect of the CEA process. Mia Azcue, Glenn Sapir and Mike all agreed to allow Julie Ruben to edit the three CEA proposals for conformity. She has already received their documents, and upon completion of her editing and sending those documents to Mike, he can then approach Bruce.

Eileen reported on the proposed cell tower on Potters Road. Mike Usai had carefully reviewed the proposal, and his comments, on behalf of the CCE, were submitted to the Planning Board. His main objection to the project was the negative scenic impact of the tower. The Planning

Board agreed and ordered the applicant for the project to go back to the drawing board in submitting a new application.

The proposed solar farm in Yorktown adjacent to the Putnam Valley High School campus was brought up, but no new information was offered. At the last meeting, a member had offered to speak to a Yorktown resident about writing a letter opposing the project to local media, but that had not been followed up on.

Wendy reported that the Town Supervisor Elect had asked Wendy to stay on the CCE, so when her Town Board term is up, she will be considered to fill a vacancy on the CCE, and a member of the Town Board will have to be named as liaison to the CCE. To maintain the mandated odd number of commissioners, another would have to be recruited when Wendy is seated. Wendy said she would like to represent the CCE at monthly Town Board meetings and offer environmental tips at these meetings.

Eileen reported on the county's Solid Waste Management Group. By June a plan is expected to be implemented to dispose of paint cans.

The next meeting of the CCE was scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 16, at 6 p.m. at the Putnam Valley Library.

Eileen reported that she will be stepping down at the end of the year as chair of the CCE, though she intends to continue serving on the CCE.

Ampion, the community solar energy provider, has given \$5,000 to the town, in addition to \$100 for each P.V. home that has signed up for the program. Recommendations for environmentally-related use of these funds can be sent to the town Climate Smart Committee, chaired by Town Board Member Ralph Smith.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Glenn Sapir, Recording Secretary

Action Items:

Eileen: Contact the Yorktown contact you mentioned at the 10/28 meeting to see if he would write a letter objecting to the proposed solar farm.

Julie: Edit the three CEA proposals for conformity.

Mike: After receiving the three edited CEA proposals from Julie, contact Bruce Barber and explain what we are doing and ask if he would review the three proposals and comment on them while selecting the one he would most like to see submitted.

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