



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

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 24, 2026, MEETING OF
THE PUTNAM VALLEY COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE
ENVIRONMENT

In Attendance: CCE members: Beth Gorman (Chair), Mike Towle, Allison Hague, Jeff Coren, Sherry Howard, Julie Ruben, and Kelly Weill

Members of the public: Eric Stone, Greg Donohue, Christie Kroll, Leah Nelson, and Sarah Bartlett

The meeting was called to order at 6:36pm. The roll was called and is reported above.

The meeting began with introductions of two candidates for the CCE's open voting member position. Candidates included:

- Eric Stone, founder of the Rewilding School. Eric has 18 years' experience as an environmental educator, and experience with conservation plans.
- Ken Sills, a member of the board of directors for Hilltop Community Homeowner's Improvement District and former member of the Putnam Valley Sustainable Energy Commission.

Mike gave a report on the CCE's Citywide working group. The working group formed to consider a proposal by Peekskill Hollow Preserve Inc. (DBA Citywide Automotive) to construct a new vehicle storage building on Peekskill Hollow Road. The proposal is awaiting approval. The CCE has been brought onto the review process as an interested party and to approve the Planning Board as the Lead Agency.. Mike identified potential concerns with the project, including:

- Unclear stormwater drainage strategy
- Proximity to drinking water supply
- History of flooding in the area of the proposed construction
- Evidence of prior, perhaps unpermitted landfill of wetlands
- Conflict with town zoning, which allows vehicle repair shops but not vehicle storage facilities at the proposed location

- Possible vernal pools - someone will assess for amphibian/reptilian mating

The CCE voted to approve a letter to the Town Board and the Planning Board documenting concerns, and suggesting an environmental review of the proposed construction be conducted. The CCE approved the Planning Board as lead agency.

Beth gave an update on the status of the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI). Formal adoption of the NRI is in the process of being added to the Town Board agenda. Sherry was assigned an action item to formally add NRI adoption to the town agenda.

The CCE discussed steps toward conducting an Open Space Inventory (OSI). Julie gave an update on the availability of a grant from the Hudson River Estuary Program. The grant application period has not yet opened. Beth proposed working with Supervisor Jolicoeur on continued discussions of an OSI.

Christie reported that the city of Peekskill has received a grant for an OSI of the Peekskill watershed, of which Putnam Valley is a major part. Julie said she would contact Peekskill's Watershed Inspector to clarify the scope of the Peekskill OSI within Putnam Valley. Beth set an action item to create a Putnam Valley-specific OSI advisory committee.

Allison summarized Putnam Valley's upcoming Earth Week programming and gave an update on the Climate Smart Task Force. Climate Smart is currently working to digitize the town's NRI documents. The Task Force has secured a grant for food scraps recycling at Putnam Valley Elementary School, and is applying for a community composting grant that would fund at least a year of compost pickup.

The CCE discussed its physical presence at other upcoming town events, including at Tompkins Corners Community Day on May 17. Kelly was assigned an action item to update educational material for distribution at the CCE's table.

The CCE returned to a discussion about future meeting dates and locations. Members voted to hold meetings on the third Tuesday of every month at the Town Hall. Beth set an action item to update the calendar to reflect the new schedule.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Kelly Weill, Secretary