



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

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 21, 2026, MEETING OF
THE PUTNAM VALLEY COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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

Members of the public: Sherry Howard (Board liaison), Mike Towle, Christie Kroll, Sarah Bartlett, Eric Stone, Ken Sills, Jenie Fu, Greg Donohue

The meeting was called to order at 6:37pm. The roll was called and is reported above.

Beth addressed the CCE's email strategies. The CCE currently maintains an email list of voting members and engaged non-members. The CCE agreed to email meeting agendas to non-member contacts ahead of monthly meetings.

Julie informed the group of her upcoming meeting with the Hudson River Estuary Program to discuss steps the CCE might take to prepare for an HREP grant application.

Kelly discussed the CCE's Community Day results. The CCE's family-focused activities, including a scavenger hunt, succeeded in attracting visitors to the CCE's tent. Allison reported on efforts to raise community awareness about food scrap recycling programs and reducing waste. She noted that the zero waste station diverted recyclables and food scraps from the waste stream, and that the display of chickens from Cucumber Hill Farm helped generate interest. The group discussed ways to engage older children at future events.

Mike gave an update on efforts to have the CCE's Natural Resources Inventory formally adopted by the Town. Mike cited concerns from the Town Board that the current NRI data may be considered stale. Mike is GIS-certified and proposed digitizing and updating NRI data in an addendum to the current version. The current NRI, marked as "accepted" by the Town, is being cited in discussions about the expansion of a cemetery. Updated data could give the most recent information. As with the current NRI, an updated version would function as a snapshot of Putnam Valley environmental data, and would not serve as a binding document. Mike plans to review the NRI data currently available online and provide the CCE with an update next month on potential updates.

Mike offered more details on his resignation as a CCE voting member, which he

submitted in advance of this meeting. He has taken a Town contract for a stormwater drainage system inventory, and resigned from his CCE membership to avoid conflicts of interest.

Allison reported on initiatives by the Climate Smart Task Force including

- An inventory of greenhouse gas emissions from Town-owned properties. Climate Smart has a year of electricity and fuel usage from Town buildings and vehicles. Climate Smart plans to digitize and analyze this data, and has already identified the Highway Department garage as an energy-inefficient site.
- Efforts to launch a food scraps recycling program in Putnam Valley schools
- A Climate Smart book club.

Beth noted that the Town has hired an interim wetlands inspector while Wetlands Inspector Bruce Barber takes a leave. The CCE discussed whether the hiring was in keeping with the Town code, which states that “The Environmental Commission shall review the qualifications of applicants for the position of Wetlands Inspector and shall recommend persons to the Town Board for appointments to that position.” Beth proposed speaking with the Town the hiring process and its adherence to code, especially with regard to interim hires. The CCE agreed to nominate the current interim wetlands inspector, but make clear to the Town Board that permanent appointments should be brought before the CCE for consideration.

The CCE discussed construction projects currently subject to review by the Planning Board. Among developments discussed:

- YMCA Camp Combe has proposed to build an amphitheatre on site, as well as new parking spaces near Peekskill Hollow Road
- The Rabbinical Society of America has revised the number of graves in its proposed cemetery from 10,000 to 6,000. The project would require eight feet of dry soil. The proposed site contains wetlands.
- A neighbor of Citywide Automotive has filed a new document detailing environmental concerns with Citywide’s proposed vehicle storage facility.

The meeting was adjourned at 8 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Weill, Secretary