

**CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, September 17, 2013**  
**Delancey Hall**

**Members Present:**           Lori Tripoli, Co-Chair  
                                  Pam Pooley, Co-Chair  
                                  Nancy Welo  
                                  Alan Towers

**Also Present:**             Janice Will, Secretary

Lori Tripoli opened the meeting. Noting that a quorum was present, she asked the Council to approve the minutes of the June 17 meeting.

The minutes were unanimously approved.

Status of vacant Council position

Ms. Tripoli stated that there has been no action regarding this vacancy.

Recent meetings attended

Ms. Tripoli stated that she attended the recent joint Planning Board/Town Board meeting at which the Planning Board was granted an extension until October 16 for submission of comments regarding the draft Environmental Impact Statement for Highgate/ Woodlands.

Mr. Towers asked who was present at the meeting.

Ms. Tripoli replied that the 2 Boards and some representatives of the Highgate/Woodlands developers were there. She said there was no formal comment period at the meeting; mainly the Boards were asking questions for clarification.

Ms. Tripoli said one of the issues discussed was rock-crushing, given that the development phase is projected to take 10 years.

Nancy Welo noted that in addition to being noisy, this activity could disrupt wells and aquifers.

Ms. Tripoli said earth-removal over a period of years is of concern too.

Ms. Welo asked if the Town Board put a time limit on the development/set a completion deadline.

Ms. Tripoli replied that they did not, but they are also working with consultants and have reports that the CAC does not have access to, so this may have been discussed at some point and she would not know. She said traffic was another issued raised at the meeting.

Alan Towers stated that he attended another Planning Board meeting at which Highgate/Woodlands was discussed, adding that there were a lot of objections to the

proposed development. He wondered if people would hear about the Planning Board's questions/comments and responses to them at another meeting or not until the formal comment submittal date in October.

Ms. Welo pointed out that Board members, unlike members of the public, may continue to ask questions.

Ms. Tripoli reiterated that the Planning Board has until October 16 to submit all comments. She said she did not know if there will be additional meetings on the topic. She further stated that, as Lead Agency, the Town Board could respond to comments, but responses will mainly come from the developers.

Ms. Tripoli said the joint meeting that she attended was not open for public comments, and the 2 boards did not discuss a date for completion of the final EAF. She remarked that the situation is a little odd in that the Town Board is Lead Agency, but the Planning Board will actually approve the project (or not).

Mr. Towers asked what the sequence will be between now and a final decision on the developers' application.

Ms. Welo said there will also be input from the DEP because of the site's proximity to the New York City reservoir. She added that this will also apply to the Commons at Purdys. She remarked that this proposal calls for very dense development in an area of the watershed that is already impacted by 684.

Mr. Towers commented that it sounded as though Highgate/Woodlands, Bridleside and the Commons at Purdys will affect traffic and increase the Town's population significantly.

Pam Pooley asked if that is an objective the CAC wants to consider.

Ms. Tripoli said she thinks it is important to continue to attend Planning Board and Town Board meetings.

Ms. Pooley agreed, although she added that she wouldn't like to see the CAC members imposed upon to attend. She asked if Ms. Tripoli had anything further to say about the joint meeting she attended.

Ms. Tripoli said the Planning Board brought up the Commons at Purdys briefly (re clarification of zoning), and someone said the Town Board is considering a moratorium on Special Permits although there was no in-depth discussion of this.

Ms. Pooley asked how the others feel about the importance of attending board meetings/ what their goal is in attending.

Ms. Welo stated that she feels written submittals are preferable to oral questions/ comments. She suggested writing dated memos after site visits or CAC meetings that could be e-mailed or hand-delivered at board meetings. Memos could include questions, requests for updates, etc.

Ms. Pooley suggested that once Planning Board and Town Board agendas are published, the CAC should see if they have questions about anything and then decide if someone should attend the meeting.

Ms. Tripoli said sometimes the meetings run quite late, and Board members also have their own documents which are not circulated.

Ms. Pooley remarked that the CAC is already committed to monthly meetings and site inspections.

Ms. Welo said that if they submitted memos, it might not be necessary to attend the meetings.

Ms. Pooley said she attended the August 14 Planning Board meeting (a work session), at which they were going through/reviewing comments re the Highgate/Woodlands DEIS. She said there were questions about a man-made dam's possible impact on the pond or drainage ways on-site and changes in outflow after a storm that the Planning Board would like the CAC to investigate.

Ms. Welo described what she thought was probably the dam site, but no one had seen it when the CAC made a site visit.

Ms. Welo offered to look into the dam issue.

Ms. Pooley said there was also concern expressed that the developers' erosion and stormwater management plans do not take into account recent climate change statistics.

#### WP11-08 Finch Farm (55 Finch Road)

Ms. Tripoli said she made a site visit with Bruce Thompson (Building Inspector) and Joe Bridges (wetlands consultant), during which they looked at the pond and plantings. She described the clay pond-liner and natural-looking boulders used to mask the filter. She explained that the water in the pond goes into a stream, through the filter, and back into the pond. Ms. Tripoli said there is also a deep pool for run-off from the road, and native plants have been put in all around. She remarked that the pond is a marvel of construction, and birds, frogs, etc. will come to it. She said they saw frogs and crayfish but no fish.

Mr. Towers said the pond may need to be stocked with fish to help prevent algae, but Ms. Tripoli pointed out that the pond is filtered.

Ms. Tripoli stated that Messrs. Thompson and Bridges had no real concerns about the project, although Mr. Bridges did note some of the native plant sources were not local and so will not be exactly the same as local plants. Ms. Tripoli said there has been a lot of disturbance, but it has all been remedied. She remarked that she was impressed with the pond but was unsure what she had contributed to the site visit.

Ms. Pooley said she thought it was important just to go on the site inspections, adding that "new eyes" can be a good thing. She said maintenance of the pond area will be a big issue.

Ms. Welo said it is important with regard to the wetlands and also stormwater, adding that some projects should be reviewed a year or so after completion.

Ms. Pooley said it is beneficial for the CAC to go on the site visits with Messrs. Thompson and Bridges because they are experts, and she always looks forward to going.

WP13-07B Bowden/Picciano (7 Lakeside Drive)

Ms. Tripoli said she had recused herself from review of this project, but she was present for the site visit. She stated that the applicants had experienced some drainage problems in the past and are now planning to build an addition to their house. Ms. Tripoli noted that Messrs. Thompson and Bridges had no problems with the proposal.

WP12-07 deVaulx (1 Lost Pond Lane)

Ms. Tripoli noted that the CAC had yet to make a site visit.

Ms. Pooley said it might not be necessary, as the project has been down-sized and will have much less impact on wetlands. She added that she needs to find out where things are at, time-wise. She explained that the applicants' horses will be moved to Florida on November 15, and they hope for the work to be done between then and April.

Mr. Towers commented that a lot of jobs are shut down for January and February.

Ms. Pooley said she hasn't met the builder yet, but she agreed that it will not be possible to do some things once the ground gets cold/freezes.

Ms. Welo commented that the trail work can be done in cold weather.

Ms. Pooley said the big part of the project is construction of an equestrian bridge across a small creek.

Ms. Welo commented that it will be better for horses to cross the water on a bridge than to go through the water.

Ms. Pooley said she hopes that some of the CAC members will be able to go along if there is a site walk planned.

WP13-06 Giannini (320 Mills Road)

Ms. Pooley said the applicant has a new house and now seeks to join 2 sheds/it is not a big job.

The secretary stated that the wetland permit has been issued.

WP12-14 Baxter Road LLC (141 Baxter Road)

The secretary said the application is mainly for a new driveway to access the farm part of the subject property.

Ms. Pooley said she went on a site walk and hopes the others will get to go in the future.

WP10-08 Monomoy Farm (806 Peach Lake Road)

Ms. Tripoli stated that the applicant has requested an extension of this permit.

Mr. Towers said the permit is for correction of a violation issued for wetlands damage during construction of the lower farm road. He said he can hear work going on from his property.

Ms. Tripoli said they also need more time because they still need the Army Corps of Engineers' review of the remediation.

Mr. Towers noted that the applicant is also adding 20 horse stalls to the existing barn.

Ms. Pooley said she is waiting to hear of a scheduled site visit.

It was agreed to keep 141 Baxter Road and 806 Peach Lake Road on the agenda.

NYS Association of Conservation Commissions meeting in Buffalo, October 3-5

Ms. Pooley said she spoke to Supervisor Warren Lucas about the availability of funds to pay for someone to attend this meeting, but most of the talks will actually be about the Erie area of the State which is not of concern to the North Salem CAC. She said she did not feel the need to attend, but Mr. Lucas was willing to fund the trip. Ms. Pooley mentioned an environmental excellence awards program that she thought the CAC should think about.

Ms. Welo said she attended some of these meetings in the past, and they were very interesting.

Ms. Pooley said she appreciated Supervisor Lucas' support of the CAC and added that there may be an appropriate meeting or conference to attend in the future. She suggested thinking of a project in Town that seems to have a positive impact on the environment that they might submit for an award.

Eagle Scout project

Ms. Tripoli asked for suggestions, remarking that perhaps the Scout (Kris Brethower) could assist with the issue of invasive species from wetlands. She said she thought he would be looking for a physical project.

Mr. Towers said maybe Kris could identify invasive species, and Ms. Welo added that he could put together a brochure.

Ms. Tripoli remarked that the Pound Ridge Conservation Advisory Board provides a lot of educational information and flyers announcing events.

Ms. Pooley said the CAC could ask Kris if he would be interested in doing research.

Ms. Welo suggested working up a list of options.

Mr. Towers agreed, adding that the Scout should be invited to the next CAC meeting. Ms. Pooley said she will contact Kris.

### Invasive Species

Ms. Tripoli said the Pound Ridge tree ordinance addresses invasive tree species (permits their removal), which the North Salem ordinance does not make allowances for.

The members discussed exemptions and restrictions in the North Salem ordinance.

Ms. Tripoli said she has not seen anything that allows invasives to be removed from a wetland without a permit. She added that people do go ahead and remove these kinds of plants.

Ms. Pooley said she thinks people don't realize where wetland areas are. She stated that the CAC should try to make people aware that permits are required/there should be some sort of oversight.

Ms. Welo thought this would be a good thing for the Eagle Scout to work on.

Mr. Towers asked if the CAC is only concerned with invasive species in wetlands or in general. He described a problem with kudzu on his property, remarking that it comes back and grows very quickly.

Ms. Tripoli said that if the Eagle Scout doesn't work on invasives, the CAC should do something re public education.

### Site visit checklist

The CAC looked over the checklist provided to Ms. Tripoli by White Plains.

Ms. Tripoli said it is a good list, but she would change the existing columns for Applicability to a space for notes. She added that the list is easily adaptable to different wetland setbacks, etc. in order to customize it for use in North Salem. She said that if everyone agreed, she will make some changes to the list and the CAC can try using it.

### Exterior lighting

Ms. Welo said she looked at a Somers book on the subject, but it is a little out of date. She said that nowadays, down-lighting is usually recommended for driveways/gates.

Mr. Towers said he had originally suggested looking into Flagstaff, Arizona, as they were the first city in the Country to pass a dark sky ordinance. He added that Tucson, Arizona also has one, so there is probably plenty of information available from both.

Ms. Welo commented that it is actually easier to see in consistent darkness than to travel from dark to light and back to dark.

Mr. Towers said there is an observatory outside of Tucson that is threatened by the spread of light from Phoenix as the city grows outward.

Ms. Tripoli said the subject will remain on the CAC agenda.

Future plans

Mr. Towers commented that a lot of what the CAC does seems to replicate the efforts of others. He said Ms. Welo had said something earlier about open land all eventually being developed, and he added that the development of Bridleside, Highgate/Woodlands and the Commons at Purdys will have an impact in terms of traffic, noise, light and water-use. Mr. Towers opined that property values can be increased by preventing development.

Ms. Welo reiterated that the Commons at Purdys will be especially dense and require a sewer system.

Mr. Towers said he is concerned about maintaining the character of North Salem, noting that change can happen very quickly.

Ms. Welo said the area's rocky ground is not good for septic systems, which has helped to keep down the rate of development.

Mr. Towers remarked that government seems designed to support development, offering tax abatements, etc. He said there is some protection, but it does not compare to the energy behind development. Noting that there may be a Town-wide re-assessment, he wondered if a plan could be devised to encourage people to "un-develop". He said there is a significant property tax reduction if a house is demolished, and he finds the principle interesting. Mr. Towers suggested that people could be offered an incentive to take down garages and guesthouses, etc. He said it would behoove the Town to do such a thing even as it reduces the tax roll, because more open land will be more valuable and properties will sell for higher prices.

Ms. Welo remarked that there is not much incentive to conserve land now.

Ms. Tripoli asked if anyone ever heard of anything like Mr. Towers' suggestion being done, and no one had.

Ms. Tripoli thought the subject merited further discussion.

Next meeting: October 15

Ms. Tripoli will prepare a draft agenda.

Ms. Welo moved to adjourn at 8:35.  
All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Janice Will, Recording Secretary