

**CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 15, 2013**  
**Delancey Hall**

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

**Also Present:**             Kris Brethower, Eagle Scout Candidate  
                                  Mark Brethower, parent  
                                  Janice Will, Secretary

Lori Tripoli opened the meeting. She suggested talking to Kris Brethower and his father first.

Eagle Scout Project

Ms. Tripoli said the group should discuss what Kris is interested in and what ideas the CAC has. She explained to Kris and his father that the CAC has existed for years, but they are trying to become more active now. She said they are a small group and short 1 member/CAC members are appointed by the Town Board. Ms. Tripoli remarked that they have discussed projects they would like some help with, but they would also like to hear Kris' ideas. Ms. Tripoli stated that, basically, whenever there is land disturbance in Town in or near a wetlands area the CAC takes an interest. She noted that some area CAC's have wonderful outreach/education projects. The North Salem CAC is just getting started; they are working on a site-inspection checklist and are still considering how they want to impact North Salem.

Mr. Brethower said he attended a hearing at the Ambulance Corps that had to do with the proposed Highgate/Woodlands development on Reed Road, and he was now considering asking to be appointed to the CAC, although he was not sure what level of commitment is required.

Nancy Welo said that in addition to meeting one evening a month, they go on some site walks on weekends and attend some Planning Board meetings.

Ms. Welo asked Kris Brethower whether he would be interested in doing research/writing or working on an outdoor project. She stated that some people have built trails and put up information stations on open land tracts and also done some reseach. She said the CAC also needs a well inventory.

Alan Towers said that some kind of work that would be educational and benefit the community would be helpful, for example information on invasive plant species.

The group agreed that some kind of pamphlet would be very educational.

Ms. Pooley said she wants to introduce an ordinance about waiving permit requirements for people who want to clear their wetlands of invasive species. She said people don't know what plants are invasive and need information. She explained that currently a wetlands permit is required to work in a wetlands area, and that permit includes escrow for payment of the Town wetlands advisor. Ms. Pooley said the CAC needs research on similar ordinances in other towns and to set parameters on what invasives are/what should be planted instead.

Ms. Welo remarked that Kris has plenty of writing to do for school already, and she doesn't want to add to the burden of research and writing.

Ms. Pooley asked Kris if he is a senior in high school.

Kris replied that he is a junior, explaining that he wanted to allow plenty of time for his Eagle Scout project (must be completed by age 18).

Ms. Pooley said the CAC does site walks, but they are not involved in any physical work.

Mr. Brethrow said the Boy Scout troop could provide help with a physical project. He stated that one of the project requirements is that it help the community and be something lasting.

Ms. Welo said there is a trail behind the Library that is owned by the North Salem Open Land Foundation that needs to be rehabilitated. She explained that it has become moribund since some of the extreme weather of the past couple of years; for example, there was plant information posted on stakes that have come down. She said rehabbing the trail could be a project.

Mr. Towers said the project chosen should fit in with Kris' school work load and be of interest to him.

Mr. Brethower said his son had gotten a good idea of the kinds of things that could be done from his conversation with Ms. Pooley.

Kris said he thought he would rather do an outdoor project than research. He remarked that it would take more leadership to do something like blazing a trail or creating a bridge (examples of Eagle Scout projects). He said the scouts could certainly also put up plant information signs or even rehab several different trails.. He said he was not sure how lasting the work of rehabbing trails would be, but the addition of signs or actually blazing a trail might be good, and he will speak to his advisor. He said he wanted to work up a list of possible projects which can then be narrowed down.

Mr. Brethrower asked if the CAC has an inventory of trails in Town, and Ms. Pooley said the Open Land Foundation has an inventory of their trails.

Ms. Welo explained to Kris that the trail behind the library actually consists of 2 loops. She noted that there are historical artifacts along the trail also, a good reason for working on the trails in the fall after the leaves have fallen.

Ms. Pooley said she believes the original trail work was done as a Scout project.

Kris stated that if any bridges need to be repaired, the troop can do that/he would be interested in such a project.

Mr. Brethrow commented that such a project would call for fund-raising, help the community and involve some engineering.

Mr. Towers commented that the purview of the CAC goes beyond wetlands; anything that conserves the rural character of the Town is of interest to them.

Mr. Brethrow asked what the difference is between the North Salem Open Land Foundation and the Conservation Advisory Council.

Ms. Welo stated that the NSOLF is a private group/not part of the local government. She said they raise money to buy parcels of land and also accept donations of land. Ms. Welo said they may need signs.

Ms. Pooley said they just completed a signage project. She said they have inventoried/named all their tracts, and they would love help with clearing, etc. She said the CAC is more interested in public education about what wetlands disturbances and steep slopes are, for example.

Ms. Welo said parts of the paths behind the library show signs of erosion.

Mr. Towers thought that if the Scouts were to clear the whole path, the OLF might stage some kind of celebration event to inform all their members that the path is clear again for walking.

Ms. Tripoli said they might try for a joint project with the NSOLF, identifying invasives or introducing some other educational component.

Ms. Pooley said Paige Dickey once produced a little pamphlet about the plants along the paths, and something like that could be revived. She said they could even have something to explain what the CAC does/wants to do.

Ms. Tripoli asked if there is a garden club in Town.

Ms. Pooley said there is a gardening group who meet at the Library, but they are not a club. She commented that after multiple serious storms, the path behind the Library is a wreck.

Kris said he thought he would have a look and note what needs to be fixed.

Ms. Welo described the route of the trails and the diamond-shaped signs for the Bridle Trail Association.

Ms. Pooley commented that the Bridle Trail Association members clear their own paths. Ms. Welo said the OLF trails are marked.

Mr. Towers asked how long the trail behind the Library is, and Ms. Welo said the two paths in the loop are less than a mile long taken together.

Ms. Pooley said the CAC is trying to identify wetland activities, whereas the NSOLF is involved in acquiring open land to preserve. She offered to accompany Kris on a walk of the path behind the Library.

Mr. Brethrow asked if there are maps on the NSOLF website.

Ms. Welo said there are, although they don't promote them heavily in order to keep traffic down, but clearing the trail and replacing the markers would be very beneficial to the community.

Ms. Pooley stated that the NSOLF has stewards who walk the trails and check on conditions. She said she thought they would be thrilled to help find a project for Kris Brethrow.

Mr. Brethrow said the project needs to be an appropriate size (neither too small nor too big).

Ms. Tripoli remarked that there could be collaborative efforts between multiple groups, which would be a good opportunity for Kris to demonstrate leadership in coordinating a project.

Mr. Towers offered to help Kris contact the NSOLF.

Kris said he has already spoken to Gloria Stein, who suggested he speak to the CAC, and now he needs to present her with an idea. He said he will call her again after he has met with his Eagle Scout project advisor. He added that if the project is too big, it can be trimmed down to a manageable size.

Mr. Towers asked how many people will be helping him.

Kris explained that there are a total of 40 scouts in his troop, and at least 15 to 20 will work on the project regularly.

Mr. Brethrow said part of the leadership aspect of the project will be getting volunteers to commit to the work.

Kris said rehabbing the trail behind the Library should be plenty to do/he has enough time to build bridges, clear trails, possibly do something about invasive species , put up signs/markers and raise funds.

Ms. Tripoli asked when Kris must finish his project.

Kris said he has until his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday/he will be 16 soon.

Ms. Tripoli said the CAC will wait to hear from Kris if he wants to do the project and if it is approved by his advisor. She thanked him and his father for attending the meeting.

The CAC members encouraged Mr. Brethrow to consider asking to be appointed a member.

#### Other - Spectra-Algonquin Pipeline Project

Commenting that the CAC seemed to have been included in the middle of a string of e-mails, Ms. Pooley asked where the original information about this project had come from.

Ms. Welo said it was from someone on another CAC. She stated that there have not been safety problems with natural gas pipelines in the past because they are very deep. While acknowledging that pipeline explosions are very frightening, she explained that most gas pipelines are so deep (approximately 50 ft.), there would be little chance of surface damage.

Mr. Towers asked if the pipelines are marked.

Ms. Welo said they are marked. She explained that the yellow posts on Starr Ridge Road are gas pipeline markers.

Ms. Pooley remarked that the CAC should have more formal official information before responding in any way.

Mr. Towers pointed out that the pipeline is not in North Salem/the CAC would really have no jurisdiction.

Ms. Tripoli said they are potential stake-holders if environmental effects are felt by people in Town.

Ms. Welo said most people don't realize how many gas pipelines there are.

Mr. Towers said Supervisor Warren Lucas had said that the Town will be getting money from the pipeline.

Ms. Welo said the Town already gets money from utility right-of-ways. She said there is one right down the middle of a NSOLF property on Baxter Road and added that the numbered, yellow, upward-facing markers enable lines to be checked by air.

Mr. Towers asked what the right-of-ways are for/what could be put there that would degrade the land

Ms. Welo explained that the one on Baxter road is a communications easement for buried telephone cables and added that flexibility is wanted for the gas pipeline.

Ms. Tripoli asked where the gas originates.

Ms. Welo stated that there is a long-existing pipeline, and what is being discussed is an extension or repair.

Ms. Pooley asked if the concern is about possible emissions.

Ms. Welo said that if the line was worked on or tampered with, that would be a possibility.

Mr. Towers noted that Amy Rosmarin mentioned a compression station to accelerate the flow of gas which she thought could create hazardous emissions.

Ms. Welo said there is a lot more pressure near where it is re-pumped in a compression station, and she described yellow, upright/bent top pipes that are relief valves for gas emissions. She explained that it is preferable to have controlled emissions rather than just having them released anywhere.

Mr. Towers said he believes the new compression station will be about 1 mile out of Town, but he would like to take the time to read everything.

Ms. Welo said she is not worried/does not fear the impact of the compression station on North Salem, and she would leave it up to Southeast take the lead in investigating the situation.

Mr. Towers said a note from Supervisor indicated that the gas company pays a lot of money to Southeast.

Ms. Welo stated that Southeast will want to see emissions controlled also.

It was agreed that the CAC had not had enough time to comment publically yet, nor do they have enough information on which to base comments.

Ms. Welo reiterated her position that the whole thing should be left up to Southeast. She told the others that NYSEG posts updates on projects on their website.

Mr. Towers remarked that natural gas seems to be the fuel of choice going forward, given the expense of clean coal and the negatives to buying fossil fuels from the Middle East.

Ms. Tripoli said the compression station will be discussed again at the next CAC meeting, when they will have more information.

#### Clearing Invasive Species from Wetlands

Ms. Tripoli asked if the CAC would discuss this or wait to hear from Kris Bethrow.

Ms. Pooley said she spoke to Joe Bridges (Town wetland consultant) about this, and he said the CAC could propose an ordinance to set standards to waive the permit requirement based on method and amount of invasives to be removed, but it would have to include ongoing maintenance/re-planting of native plants.

Ms. Welo stated that invasives like phragmites are constantly re-seeding, so it is important to plant something more aggressive.

Mr. Towers said he has what he thinks is kudzu on his property, and it is a big problem. He Towers asked who would monitor the situation once a resident removed invasive species, and it was agreed that that would be a problem.

Ms. Pooley said they could consider allowing residents to use a wetlands weed control product like Rodeo, but Ms. Welo said that would be hard to get DEP approval for.

Ms. Pooley said regularly cutting invasives by hand and taking the cut plants away goes a long way toward controlling them. She suggested the CAC think about this in terms of things to try and accomplish next year.

Ms. Tripoli said she likes the idea of waiving the permit/reducing requirements to help people with the problem.

Ms. Pooley said she thinks cutting the expense will encourage people to ask what they can/should do, and then the CAC can set some standards, like using silt-fencing, etc.

Ms. Tripoli said that even if the CAC does not go so far as to propose an ordinance, they can make recommendations that some work be permitted based on guidelines. She suggested writing a memo.

Ms. Pooley asked what Board they would need to speak to if they want an ordinance, and Ms. Welo said that would be up to the Town Board.

Ms. Pooley said she will speak to Cynthia Curtis (Chairperson of the Planning Board).

Mr. Towers said he appreciates Joe Bridges' support of such a plan, but enforcement is a big part of any ordinance. If a proposed ordinance can't be enforced, the Town Board will not accept it.

Ms. Pooley said she thought that in that case, they could go with Ms. Tripoli's idea of writing a memo, recommending criteria for invasive species removal from wetlands.

Mr. Towers commented that people avoid getting permits because of the cost.

Ms. Tripoli said the CAC can still provide tips on dealing with invasives.

Mr. Towers asked how the information would be made public, and Ms. Pooley suggested putting information on the Town website and/or producing a booklet.

Ms. Welo said it is a good time to try and produce something informative, because people look to do outdoor work in the spring.

Mr. Towers asked how big an issue invasive plant-removal is in North Salem, and Ms. Welo replied that she thinks it is big.

Mr. Towers remarked that if a large number of people are impacted, the CAC may need to consider a larger context and ask the Town Board to take up the issue, either with funding or a municipal removal program. He said they should try to find out how big the issue of invasive plants in Town is.

Ms. Welo said the County was surveying invasives.

Mr. Towers said he spoke to someone with the County who told him they were only doing the work or paying for removal of invasive plants from government or municipal property/they are not involved in the private sector.

Ms. Welo said she thought they were doing an infiltration survey to try and track the spread of invasives.

Mr. Towers said that before doing anything on a micro basis, it would help for the CAC to know how big the problem is in Town.

Ms. Tripoli said education could be a good starting point.

Mr. Towers said people don't even know they have invasive species on their property, and he wondered if the problem is a potential time-bomb. If there were a Town-wide eradication project, the Town would pay for that.

It was agreed that invasive species that are not in wetlands are a problem too.

Ms. Tripoli said they have some ideas now, so the CAC should speak more definitively in November about what they want to accomplish in 2014.

### Site Visit Checklist

Ms. Tripoli said she tinkered some with the language of the existing list and e-mailed it to the others. Everyone (with the possible exception of Ms. Pooley) agreed to meet at 141 Baxter Road (application WP12-14) for a site inspection with the Building Inspector and Joe Bridges the next day.

### Exterior Lighting/Dark Sky

Ms. Tripoli pointed out that the Town's ordinance applies to new lighting, but there is nothing addressing existing lights.

Ms. Welo commented that the placement of lights on entrance pillars is often at a height that blinds drivers but does not illuminate the house number.

Mr. Towers didn't think anything could be done about existing fixtures.

The subject was tabled for the time being.

### Elimination of Unwanted Structures

Mr. Towers stated that there is to be a Town-wide reassessment that will result in higher taxes for many residents without any increase in services, and he wondered if people could be offered a way to reduce their tax burden by demolishing unused/unwanted buildings, perhaps with Town monies as an incentive.

Ms. Pooley was of the impression that once a building is removed, nothing may be constructed on that exact site again.

Ms. Welo said that is not the case; a new foundation and new septic may have to be put in, but people re-build on exact sites all the time.

Mr. Towers explained that he knows someone who has an old cottage who doesn't want it but also doesn't want the expense of having it demolished. Mr. Towers wondered if the reduction in taxes might make it worth the expense of demolition. If that is the case, it could be information the CAC would like to share.

Ms. Pooley remarked that she thought this would be too much for the CAC to take on, and Ms. Welo said it could be recommended to the Planning Board..

Mr. Towers said he would like to see land in Town returned to its natural state, but he doesn't know how.

Ms. Tripoli said tax reductions are beyond the purview of the CAC.

Mr. Towers expressed dismay at the size of some upcoming developments.

Ms. Welo agreed that open space and farms are disappearing.

Ms. Tripoli asked how the CAC can encourage farms and discourage development.

Ms. Welo commented that there are no viewshed rules.

Mr. Towers remarked that there are limits to what the courts will allow a government to stop.

#### Meetings of Other Groups

Ms. Pooley said she attended the last Planning Board meeting.

Ms Tripoli said she will try to go to the next one, and Mr. Towers may watch it on television.

#### WP12-07, 1 Lost Pond Land/deVaulx

Ms. Pooley said the project is moving forward. She added that Joe Bridges wanted the proposed equestrian bridge shifted to a narrower part of the stream, and the architect is working on that. She said she found it interesting that Dr. Bridges also asked if there wasn't another way to get to the jump field without requiring the bridge. Ms. Pooley said she believes the wetland permit will be issued soon.

Ms. Tripoli said the application will be taken off the agenda.

#### WP13-08, Bloomerside Co-op

Ms. Pooley described the proposed drainage project, noting that several large trees will have to be removed. She asked Dr. Bridges what the CAC could do, and he suggested they recommend that native shrubs be planted if the trees are removed.

Mr. Towers asked if there is any alternative to removing the trees.

Ms. Pooley said the area is very narrow/there is no room for a rain garden. The engineer is working to reduce run-off which Dr. Bridges supports. She asked if the CAC should send a memo requesting that native plants be required and suggest some plants. Ms. Pooley offered to circulate a draft of a memo to go to Bruce Thompson and Joe Bridges, with a cc to Cynthia Curtis.

#### WP13-09, 296 Titicus Road/St. James

It was agreed that there will be very little disturbance involved in this project/no need to discuss.

#### Highgate/Woodlands

To be discussed in November.

#### WP10-08, 806 Peach Lake Road/Monomoy Farm

CAC would like to go on a site visit if there is one.

The Commons at Purdys

Ms. Tripoli noted that scoping is at a preliminary stage, and there is no opportunity for comment at yet.

2014 Plans/Goals

Mr. Towers said his goal is to see a noise ordinance, because noise currently disturbs the peaceful character of the Town. He stated that construction-associated noise is currently permitted all day (8 am to dusk), 365 days a year. Mr. Towers stated that his goal may not be easy to accomplish; he worked on a recommendation of a noise ordinance for the Comprehensive Plan Committee, based on a Town-wide survey indicating that noise-reduction was the second most desired change, but it was ignored.

Ms. Pooley commented that such an ordinance would be hard to enforce.

Ms. Welo pointed out that electric leaf-blowers, etc. make less noise than gas-powered tools/appliances.

Mr. Towers stated that the City of Rye has banned the use of blowers between May and September.

Ms. Pooley thought a noise ordinance might be a project the CAC could work on. She suggested everyone make a list of things they would like to do so a plan can be worked up.

2014 plans to be discussed further in November.

Approval of September 17 Meeting Minutes

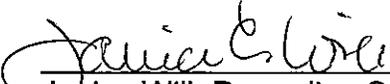
Approved.

To adjourn at 8:45 pm.

**Motion by: Nancy Welo**

**All in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Janice Will, Recording Secretary