

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 27, 2015
Delancey Hall

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

Also Present: Janice Will, Secretary

Co-chairperson Lori Tripoli opened the meeting.

The minutes of the June 15 meeting were unanimously approved. The Council members will review the minutes of the June 25 meeting and approve them at another time.

Inspecting conservation easements

Ms. Tripoli stated that she prepared a second draft letter to the Town Board requesting permission for the CAC to inspect the Town's conservation easements. She thought it reasonable to say the CAC will try to do the inspections every 3 years.

Ms. Pooley explained that when the letter was discussed at the June meeting, those present agreed that offering to do the inspections every year could be too much to take on.

Ms. Tripoli went on to say that the letter states that the CAC will be accompanied/assisted by either Mr. Thompson or Cynthia Curtis when they make their initial inspection (Bloomerside).

Alan Towers commented that the CAC should see if they are covered by some kind of Town insurance and also if the Town provides an attorney in the event of a suit.

Janine Selendy thought the CAC should go over the list of conservation easements and choose one to start with.

Ms. Pooley explained that they did; it was agreed that the 60-acre easement on Bloomer Road (across from Bloomerside) would be a good first attempt. She added that Gloria Stein of the North Salem Open Land Foundation will accompany them. Ms. Pooley thought the CAC might consult Mr. Thompson and/or Ms. Curtis on how to manage contentious issues, should they arise. She said they will use the NSOLF letter to property-owners as a template for their own notice of upcoming inspections.

To approve the letter to the Town Board requesting authorization for the CAC to inspect conservation easements.

Motion by: Janine Selendy

Seconded by: Nancy Welo

All in favor.

BMP/removal of invasive species

Ms. Pooley said she has copies of plans prepared for the NSOLF, so she just needs to find the time to work up something for the CAC. She added that she also has a list of invasive plants from the State, and she hopes to get the plan written in August.

Southeast pipeline expansion

Mr. Towers said Amy Rosmarin is having no luck getting an appointment to speak to the pipeline people, but he told her he will go with her if she gets one.

Ms. Welo remarked that 2-cycle lawn equipment, which has no filters or mufflers, creates more air pollution than the pipeline compressor stations' release valves.

Ms. Tripoli said another town outlawed these kinds of equipment, and residents found their gardening bills were substantially higher because the workers had to rake all the debris they used to blow away.

Mr. Towers said electric equipment can be used in place of gas-powered machines.

Ms. Selendy asked if the change to the noise ordinance includes these machines.

Mr. Towers said property-maintenance is still exempt from the ordinance.

(further) Update on noise

Mr. Towers said the Ordinance change is complete/it is the law now.

Everyone thanked Mr. Towers for his work on this project.

The secretary said the change became effective on July 6.

Ms. Welo suggested the Police should be informed of the change.

Mr. Towers said a problem is that people will not know about it.

Ms. Selendy said it was written up in the local weekly newspaper.

Ms. Pooley said the CAC could put it up on their Facebook page.

Hudson to Housatonic Initiative

Ms. Pooley said this project (started in autumn of 2014) is a regional partnership to promote/encourage stewardship of forest/wooded land, funded by the US Forestry Service. The Westchester Land Trust, Mianus Gorge and Highstead (both CT) worked

together to get a grant. The NSOLF was asked for 2 representatives, and they in turn invited Ms. Pooley to participate as an ad hoc representative.

Ms. Pooley said the idea is to get land-owners (especially of 10+ acres) to consider both stewardship and conservation easements; different groups are to work together regionally. North Salem was grouped with the Lewisboro Land Trust, the Ridgefield Conservation Commission, and the Land Conservancy of Ridgefield. This group is hosting a gathering on August 9 to talk mostly to owners of smaller properties about stewardship (Bedford Audubon Society will also be there). Ms. Pooley said a woman from Pound Ridge will speak on invasive species. She added that she will identify herself as co-chair of the CAC (and hand out CAC cards), but the NSOLF is the official North Salem member of the group. She said the goal is to get people together to talk about what interests them/what their concerns are. Ms. Pooley said she thinks invasive species will probably be the main topic.

Ms. Selendy said the statement in the invitation, "Discover the critical role your backyard plays in the protection of habitat and clean water" is an important topic.

The group brought up topics relative to clean water and animal species that might be discussed at the gathering.

Meetings attended

Mr. Towers provided notes taken at the July 8 Planning Board meeting, and he said he attended another meeting/did not take notes. He stated that he also attended an Energy Conservation Initiative hosted by New York State. He explained that a \$25,000 grant was provided for a small property in Croton Falls to fix something major. Mr. Towers said the way the grant works is that instead of paying the contractor, the money goes to the property-owner, and the debt goes onto the tax bill to be amortized over a period of time. He commented that this would be a big help to a property-owner who might otherwise be unable to afford to get a big job done, but it would be a problem if the owner wanted to sell the property any time soon. Mr. Towers said it is not like the grant program that offers a 10% reduction if a property-owner has their home evaluated/has it insulated to cut energy costs; this program is only available to corporate owners. He stated that the ceremony was held at the house in Croton Falls and attended by government official and plan participants.

Hawley Woods

Ms. Pooley said some concerned neighbors attended the Planning Board meeting when this project was on the agenda. The owner has been asked to conduct a boring test to determine what type of rock will have to be drilled into when the shared road is put in (help in determining the cost), and the well test has not been done yet either. Ms. Pooley said she believes the comment period has been closed.

Mr. Towers said notifying neighboring property-owners of significant events to occur as part of developing the site was brought up as well. He added that the work will have a huge impact on the neighbors and could take years.

Salem Golf Club

Ms. Tripoli said a recent memo indicated that the DEC is concerned about pool back-wash.

Ms. Welo said they are also concerned about chlorinated pool water being released.

Mr. Towers remarked that if the plan to put in the pool becomes difficult/expensive enough, the Club will probably not go ahead with it. If the club loses members/fails, the property could be sold to a developer.

Gilport Development/Salem Hills

Ms. Selendy said she did not go along on the site walk as planned because she never got directions; there were no other updates on this project.

WP15-02 Steiner, 148 Finch Road

The wetland permit has been issued. Remove from CAC agenda.

Homeland Towers/Bloomerside

Project approved; remove from CAC agenda.

Next meeting

Some people were not available on the scheduled meeting date, August 17. It was decided to meet next on September 21.

Respectfully submitted,


Janice Will, Recording Secretary