

**Town of Clinton Conservation Advisory Council
Minutes –February 9, 2011**

Note: The January 12, 2011, CAC meeting was cancelled because of inclement weather.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Sarah Love, Chair.

Members present: Sarah Love, chair, Jen Cavanaugh, Norene Coller, Mike DiGiacomo and Barbara Mansell.

Town Board Liaison: Frank Venezia.

Members of the public present: Bill Relyea and Amy Bloomfield, Biodiversity Monitoring Specialist, Region 3 DEC.

Public Comment: Sarah announced that the new CAC Chairman in Hyde Park is David Lomasney.

Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of December 16, 2010, was made by Barbara Mansell and seconded by Jen Cavanaugh. All members voted in favor.

Communications: The permits of Wowaka on East Fallkill Road and Pearl on Schultz Hill Road will be discussed at the February 21st meeting of the Planning Board. Jen has written comments on both applications. Jen and Norene will attend.

Amy Bloomfield, Biodiversity Monitoring Specialist from Region 3 DEC, spoke about their program, funded by Cornell University and a NYS grant, to monitor vernal pool amphibians using methods developed last year on 35 sites on public lands. Since most land is in private ownership, the program would like to monitor vernal pools on private lands in spring, 2011. Amy described their method of monitoring by placing four boards around the perimeter of the pools in early March, then returning periodically to check for egg masses and individual wood frogs and salamanders.

Amy explained that she has contacted the land trusts to find interested landowners who might be willing to take part in the program. They hope to find landowners who would be willing to conduct some of the monitoring. Jen asked how they planned to train the landowners. Amy stated that they hoped to have landowner cooperation. Sarah noted that Bill and Norene had taken part in the Hudsonia biodiversity training in 2001 and could assist with the monitoring and expressed hope that CAC members could assist in the monitoring. She noted that some vernal pools could be identified by the Army Corps of Engineers wetland overlay and color infrared photographs.

Amy explained the DEC plan to monitor 10 to 15 pool sites in Dutchess and Columbia Counties, with several in Clinton. Bill, Sarah and Norene agreed to identify three sites in Clinton, contact the landowners and communicate the information to Amy.

Amy also reminded the CAC that the DEC has an amphibian call identification program seeking volunteers and a road crossing study to identify locations where amphibians are moving in early breeding migrations looking for possible road mortalities. Contact Laura Heady if interested in the latter program.

Grant update: The grant funds available to the CAC are as follows:

Finances:	Source	Amount	Spent	Remaining
	McDermott Trust	\$1000	\$836.75	\$ 164.25
	Town of Clinton	\$1500	\$110.79	\$1389.21

Education and Outreach: Barbara, as new chairman of the Nature Trail committee, reported on the meeting called by Paul Schwarze that was held on Saturday, January 8. The committee agreed to ask the Recreation Committee to provide funding to purchase lime to alter the pH of the wildflower garden, after testing is completed by Paul Schwarze. Paul also proposed building a gazebo on the Nature Trail property, suggesting that it should be 40' by 30' in size. The group had discussed the possible location and issues relating to vandalism. Paul volunteered to contribute \$500 toward the construction. Bill noted that Paul should create a plan to be submitted to the Town Board. Supervisor, Jeff Burns, has stated that he would contact Iroquois Gas Pipeline to check on any limitations, since their grant funds purchased the Nature Trail property.

Frank stated that, based on his memory of the covenant with Iroquois, no permanent structures may be placed on the property. He will verify this information. Frank noted that the Nature Trail Committee should be coordinating with the Recreation Committee.

An event will be planned this spring to honor Eagle Scout, David Foote, for his work creating trail markers and information for the Nature Trail.

Barbara also noted that the 2011 Great Backyard Bird Count will be held February 18th to 21st. An event with the Clinton Community Library will be planned. She has contacted librarian, Terry Sennett, about a possible program, considering the heavy snow cover. A walk around the parking lot is a possibility. Barbara will place publicity on the sign board on Centre Road and the web site.

Barbara has created 32 more folders for town newcomers and placed them in the office of the Town Clerk and in the Clinton Community Library.

Bill noted that the Winnakee Land Trust was reaching out to the CAC's to create a network to better protect land with important natural resources. Bill showed a map and information created by the land trust to rank properties for consideration for Conservation Easements.

Bill and Norene summarized the meeting they attended with Planning Board member, Eliot Werner, in Columbia County on January 31 sponsored by Hudsonia and the Columbia County Land Trust to inform local volunteers about the work of CAC's in Dutchess County. The meeting had been attended by about 60 people. Information presented stressed the good working relationship with the other town boards, especially the Planning Board. Many good questions had been asked by the audience.

Open Space and Farmland Protection: Norene stated that the town does not plan to hold a farm tour in 2011. Frank noted that the Town Board would be appointing a Farmland Protection Committee to implement recommendations of the Farmland Protection Plan which was accepted in December, 2010. They are waiting approval from the New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets.

Goals for 2011: The CAC reviewed and approved the CAC goals for 2011 and the 2010 Annual Report which will be presented at the Cornell Cooperative Extension CAC meeting on February 23rd.

Old and New Business: Norene distributed information about the Emil Schoch award which the CAC has recommended to the Clinton Historical Society for presentation at their April meeting and pot luck dinner. The group discussed possible recommendations for the 2011 award.

Sarah described the event she had attended sponsored by the Northern Dutchess Alliance to honor Phyllis Feder of Clinton Vineyard and Skip Baccus of The Omega Institute.

Bill Relyea volunteered to serve on the CAC for 2011. Members thanked him!

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Norene Coller

Norene Coller, Secretary **Next CAC meeting: March 9, 2011 at 7 PM.**