

**Town of Clinton Conservation Advisory Council
Minutes – February 11, 2015**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Norene Coller, Chair.

Members present: Norene Coller and Barbara Mansell.

Members of the public present: Dick Coller, Greg Quinn and Jess Scott.

Public Comment: Greg Quinn spoke about his weekly feature on the web, “Notes from the Currant Farm,” which includes a segment about the farm, seasonal change and natural history. This is his effort to help people become more knowledgeable about the farm. Norene noted the most recent broadcast which featured bluebirds nestled at the bottom of a bluebird box for warmth. She asked if these segments could be placed on the Town of Clinton webpage.

Barbara Mansell suggested that these might better be placed on the Clinton Community webpage. She will attempt to do that.

The group then discussed how best to implement the plans most recently achieved and adopted by the town. Jess Scott suggested that there should be a Clinton community page which could allow people in town to better stay in touch. The implementation of the Farmland Protection Plan, Open Space Plan and research completed in the Biodiversity Survey could be included on that webpage.

Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes of January 14, 2015, was made by Barbara Mansell and seconded by Norene Coller. All members voted in favor.

Communications: Norene distributed copies of the CAC 2014 Annual Report to guests and stated that she would be presenting the report at the February 25th meeting of CAC’s at Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Norene distributed a letter that CAC had presented at the Town Board meeting last night (February 10th) about power line upgrades on Schultzville Road. She had responded to requests from residents and cited the town Zoning Law, Scenic Road Law and Greenway criteria in a response to Central Hudson. The hope is that the utility will allow trees and hedgerows which border the farms to remain, while upgrading the power to a more secure wiring system. Dick noted that the circuit could be upgraded to 15 KV, encompassed in new cables on new poles.

The Town Board will adopt a moratorium on the installation of solar panels in the near future. No town law currently exists. Jess Scott discussed various options available to the town, including a standardized procedure established by New York State to facilitate the installation of solar panels for the use of property owners. Rhinebeck and Red Hook currently have adopted such a law. Jess offered to provide information and organize a workshop for Town Board members and others who are interested. Barbara mentioned a controversial installation on Sunset and Horseshoe Trails. Greg noted that a species of arborvitae which is deer resistant and grows three feet a year may be effective.

Finances:	Source	Amount	Spent	Remaining
	Clinton Watch	\$3740.46	\$2642.71	\$857.75
	Town of Clinton	\$975.00	\$25.47	\$949.53

Funds were spend on printing and mailing a grant application to the Hudson River Valley Greenway.

Water, Watersheds and Wetlands: Members would like to reach out to the Long Pond Association in the spring to determine what problems they are facing.

Biodiversity: In the spring the CAC will sponsor a workshop to be held at The Omega Institute developed by Hudsonia about wildlife corridors. The group would like to have the workshop open to all town residents and discussed details of mailing procedures and costs. Laura Weiland will be contacted when Omega reopens in the spring.

Education and Outreach: Barbara Mansell will add information about recycling to the newcomer folders which are placed with the Town Clerk, Clinton library and Clinton Corners post office.

Nature Trail Subcommittee: The CAC has been asked to plant a memorial tree for Fran Monahan, former town supervisor and friend. Norene has been doing research on native trees which might be suitable. She asked for suggestions. Barbara will plan an event in the spring for Fran's friends at the Nature Garden. Other improvements will be made for that occasion. The group would like to make use of the remaining funds in the Clinton Watch account.

Green Energy and Climate Change: Barbara will place information about the town's geothermal system on the Town web site.

Open Space Plan: Barbara Mansell hopes that the recommendations for the Open Space Plan will be implemented by the Zoning Revision Committee on which she serves as a representative of the CAC.

Zoning Revision: Barbara Mansell discussed the meetings of the Zoning Revision Committee and noted that progress had been slow. Norene had attended the meeting to discuss the Greenway grant application with the members, noting that there may be changes in the work of the committee since the grant requires that Greenway criteria be met.

Proposed Powerlines – Environmental Subcommittee: Greg explained that the Hudson Valley Smart Coalition (HVSEC), the Coalition of municipalities, citizen groups, conservation entities, farms, etc. of which he is a member, is preparing for a technology conference to be held at the end of June about the proposed power line upgrade. He stated that there had been considerable "push back" from members of the Coalition that would be impacted by upgrades of power lines. The conference response, being organized by the coalition, would be focusing on the "need" issue. There are ten projects "in the queue." He noted that the PSC apparently had done little to address the "need" issue before issuing the RFP in 2013. There have already been major changes in the proposals and he predicts there will be more.

Greg stated that he had attended a workshop at The Omega Institute conducted by energy expert, Jeremy Rifkin, which compared the power situation in the US with Europe. He noted that major changes have occurred in Europe with power generation, electrical storage and upgrading inefficient electricity consumers such as A/C units. Many of those changes could be applicable here in New York.

Old and New Business: No new information.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:10

Respectfully submitted,

Norene Coller

Norene Coller, Chair

Next CAC meeting: March 11, 2015 at 7 PM