

**Town of Clinton Conservation Advisory Council**  
**Annual Report for 2017**

**Members:** Norene Collier, Chair, Barbara Mansell and Bill Relyea.

**Summary:** The Town of Clinton Conservation Advisory Council had 7 regular meetings in 2017 attended by as many as 9 and as few as 2 individuals. Members worked toward protecting town water resources, open space, wildlife habitat, farmland, energy conservation and developing more effective education for town residents. The CAC section of the Town of Clinton website has been updated, including information about CAC activities and links to documents and websites containing information helpful to town residents. The members also focused on reviewing subdivision applications and other questions referred to the CAC by the Planning Board, ZBA and Building Department.

**Relationship to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals:** The CAC continues to consult with these boards on an as-needed basis about site plans and subdivision proposals, particularly where wetlands, riparian zones and steep slopes are impacted. In 2017 the CAC responded to **one request** and made recommendations concerning environmental issues for permits or variances requested before the Planning Board. The planned subdivision did not take place.

**Concerns about Zoning Enforcement:** The CAC has continued to work with Louis Fiorese, the Zoning Enforcement Officer, when asked for information or advice. CAC members met with Mr. Fiorese to discuss protection of rare wildlife habitat on undeveloped land, particularly along the Crum Elbow Creek bordering the Town of Rhinebeck. Landowners along the creek changed their plans based on a conversation with a Rhinebeck town official. Better understanding of the rare wildlife habitat was key to altering the plans for development.

**Budget:** The CAC budget for 2017 was \$700.

<b>Expenses:</b>	Engraving Emil Schoch plaque:	\$15.00
	Paint for Nature Trail signs:	30.12
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$45.12</b>

**Funds not spent:**       **\$654.12**

**Grant Application:** In February, 2015, the CAC Chair applied for and was awarded a grant for \$10,000 from the Hudson River Valley Greenway to be used in the updating of the Town of Clinton Zoning Law. The revised law must meet the criteria of the Greenway in the use of these funds.

**Zoning Revision Committee:** Barbara Mansell serves as the CAC representative on the Zoning Revision Committee. The committee's role is to update the current zoning law as recommended by the approved Comprehensive Plan, Open Space and Farmland Protection Laws.

**Emil Schoch Conservation and Preservation Award:** Since 2001 the CAC has been presenting the Emil Schoch Conservation and Preservation Award to deserving Clinton landowners who have protected and preserved land in a manner which supports land conservation. In 2016 the Emil Schoch award was presented to Carol and Fred Valentine for protecting their old home and farmland on Schoolhouse Road.

**Biodiversity:** The CAC worked with Hudsonia staff to protect areas of habitat of rare wildlife.

**Education and Outreach:** Barbara Mansell continues to maintain and duplicate materials for a folder for newcomers in the Clinton which is distributed by the offices of the Town Clerk, Assessor, Clinton Community Library and Clinton Corners Post Office. Included information about town facilities, recycling, maintaining wells and septic systems and other information related to the natural environment.

**The Nature Trail:** Barbara Mansell, Chair of the Nature Trail, continues to monitor maintenance of the trail, completed by the Clinton Highway Department.

**Open Space:** The CAC discussed the protection of open space as defined in the town Open Space Plan. This is an important priority for the Town of Clinton.

**Climate Smart:** The CAC discussed the New York State Climate Smart Pledge as regards the town. Meeting with Theron Tompkins, the Clinton Highway Superintendent, the group was informed about that department's efforts to conserve fuel and energy.

**Agricultural Protection:** The CAC was informed about New York State's efforts to protect farmland and sent a report indicating that 13 percent of land in the town was classified as farmland under the state's definition. Most of this farmland in Clinton is used for the breeding and raising of horses and cattle. A report on this topic was made to the Town Board.

**Town Web Site:** Barbara Mansell has continued to update the Conservation Advisory Council's work on the new Town of Clinton website to enable town residents to obtain meeting agendas, approved minutes, and relevant information with up-to-date environmental information.

(See <http://www.townofclinton.com/government/conservation-advisory-council/>.)

Respectfully submitted

***Norene Collier:***

cc: CAC members, Town Board and Town Clerk

Norene Collier