



TOWN OF AMENIA

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
4988 Route 22, Amenia, NY 12501

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MAY 16 2024

Amenia Town Clerk

CAC MEETING MINUTES

January 17, 2024, 7:00PM
Amenia Town Hall

Present: Michael Peek (chair), Vicki Doyle, Christy Gast, Sharon Kroeger, Rhett Roback
Absent: Mark Doyle, Stacy Mantel, Nancy Schaefer

1. Vicki Doyle / Town Board liaison

The Town Board has not yet appointed a new liaison to the CAC. They are holding off on committee assignments until the fifth town board member has been named. Meanwhile, a huge thank you to Vicki for her hard work and support of the CAC over the years. She will continue to attend meetings, participate in CAC activities, and organize clean-up day.

The energy audit of Town Hall is complete and a report was finalized. We now have concrete suggestions as to how the town hall can be made more efficient while also lowering carbon emissions. Our Building Inspector accompanied the auditor through the building. The EV grant requires an MOU with the Dept of Public Works, who will maintain it.

2. Meeting Schedule

We will continue to meet on the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm at Town Hall. Please send agenda items to Michael prior to meetings.

3. Other Important Dates

Feb 14: Annual report is due to Cornell CCEDCC for EMC/CAC Roundtable

Feb 29: Annual EMC/CAC Roundtable at the Farm & Home Center in Millbrook

April 20: Earth Day Amenia. We're collaborating with Millerton this year. The event will be held once again in the gym at Town Hall. Nancy Schaefer is our point person.

April 27: Annual Town Clean-up Day

4. Minutes

Christy will take notes. Michael will compile minutes and email to the group within one week of the meeting. Minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

5. Membership

During recent years, we've operated under the assumption that there are nine seats available, with seven reserved for community members (all currently filled) and two ex officio members from town government (i.e. liaisons). Local code makes refers to "terms of office," but is unclear with regard to length and timing of those terms – stating simply that we serve at the pleasure of the board. Based on her recollection of local history, Sharon feels the terms should be staggered 3-3-3 (three members appointed

to three-year terms each year). She has asked the town clerk to search the archives for historical precedence.

6. Troutbeck / Delamater House

Troutbeck's plans including the historic Delamater House have been approved by the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO.) We understand and respect that SHPO likes to see historic buildings preserved and restored – but also put back into meaningful use. The owner was originally intending to restore the house – which has fallen into significant disrepair – and convert it to a restaurant. Subsequently, plans have been modified to create a 2-unit lodging facility instead. This should result in lower stress on the historic property and a smaller ecological footprint as well. Vicki reminded the group that cultural resources do indeed fall under the purview of CAC. Sharon pointed out that the property falls within the Webutuck Agricultural Valley Historic District, which the CAC has supported. George Bistransin expressed concerns that the east façade will be considerably changed during redevelopment. He also expressed concerns about a proposed staging area that Troutbeck has proposed to the Planning Board, which would be located right on SR-343.

7. Climate Smart Update from Stacy (via e-mail)

We have applied for a Decarbonization Grant via Partners for Climate Action, and we should hear back from them soon. We asked for \$77K to install eight ductless mini-split heat pumps in the gym. They will both heat and cool. As this is a "decarbonization" grant which aims to decrease burning of fossil fuels, the zone that heats the gym/locker room/"kitchen" will be shut off and only turned on in extreme low temperature. We may need a resolution from the Town Board reflecting this policy to comply with terms of the grant.

We are working on another \$5K grant via Climate Smart Communities regarding heat pumps. When five families or businesses install heat pumps, we will qualify. We can track this activity via the Building Department, as the town requires permits for these installations.

We are also doing some administrative follow-up on the grant we received for the Road Stream Crossing Evaluation and Vulnerability Assessment completed some time ago by the HVA. It is thoroughly researched and documented. Brenna is working on this along with Vicki and the DEC.

Another Repair Cafe will be planned for April as well.

8. Discussion of proposed resolution re: Silo Ridge's new project

Two versions were discussed...

From October: We recommend to the planning board that they insist on clustered development as required to by the comp plan with regards to the view from DeLaVergne Hill.

From January: Whereas the view from Delavergne Hill is historically and regionally important to Amenia, the CAC recommends that the Planning Board require clustered development as required by the town's Comprehensive Plan.

After group discussion, this item was tabled for further development.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Peek, Chair
Conservation Advisory Council

Approved: _____ Date: _____