



TOWN OF AMENIA

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
4988 Route 22, Amenia, NY 12501

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APR 17 2024

Amenia Town Clerk

CAC MEETING MINUTES

March 20, 2024 - 7:00PM

Amenia Town Hall

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

1. Minutes from our January 17 meeting were approved via motion from M. Doyle, which was seconded by R. Roback and unanimous vote by the group.

2. Annual EMC/CAC Roundtable

Michael, Sharon and Vicki attended the annual CAC/EMC Roundtable event at the Farm & Home Center in Millbrook. Michael presented our achievements, challenges and plans for the coming year as summarized in our annual report to the group. A central theme was the importance of partnerships, particularly to small rural communities like ours in eastern Dutchess County. Due to limited resources and fewer funding opportunities outside of the Hudson River watershed, our accomplishments have been largely realized through partnerships with local non-profit organizations. We expect there will be more such opportunities to come as well as opportunities to collaborate with neighboring towns and villages.

3. Planning Board updates

- Troutbeck: Phase 1 development, which was approved by the Planning Board, has been stalled due to an Article 78 filing. Meanwhile, the applicant is seeking approval for elements from Phases 2 and 6. This includes improvements to the Manor House and staff parking, enclosure of an outdoor dining area, rerouting of Spingarn Road, creation of a staging area for construction materials and installation of septic fields. Phase 6 includes the Delameter House, which is now proposed to be additional housing units rather than a café/restaurant. CAC reviewed planning docs and has concerns regarding the planting scheme relative to septic fields. Troutbeck is proposing to install septic fields sooner than originally planned so that screening can be done earlier in the process. PB has requested additional information before proceeding.
- Keane Stud: The Planning Board has waived the requirement for a Conservation Subdivision based on a Conservation Analysis presented by the applicant. This property is located within the Resort Development Overlay (RDO). The applicant proposes to develop a conventional subdivision of appx 30 lots on 700 acres. The applicant claims their proposal, which will include designated building envelopes and deed restrictions, will have less environmental impact than the alternative. We're of the opinion that this remains to be seen, as they haven't yet shown this to be the case. The PB has asked the applicant to prepare a Visual Impact Analysis which will be reviewed by the town's consultant (George Janes) who is a recognized expert in the field. We continued our discussion of a draft resolution Sharon has proposed to express the importance of protecting and preserving the town's natural resources and the view from Delavergne Hill. We agreed it needs further development and tabled until the next meeting.

4. Climate Smart / Grants update:

Stacy sent an update via e-mail. We're pursuing a grant via HVRC and a consortium of Mid-Hudson municipalities with closed landfills. The goal is to accurately measure emissions coming from landfills and to mitigate emissions through biofilters. It also includes feasibility studies for landfill solar. Vicki also provided updates. The ball is still in the DEC's court on the EV grant -- which we won! DEC requires work plan modification before work can begin. Next step is an MOU between involved parties. Stacy and Vicki are going to complete a webinar on the new portal. Our application for a "decarbonization grant" (heat pumps at Town Hall) was unsuccessful, but we expect there will be future opportunities (via HVRC cohort?) and we plan to re-apply. Some admin/reporting also needs to be done on prior grants for reimbursement.

5. Amenia's Climate Action Plan (Vicki)

Dutchess County Climate Action Planning Institute (CAPI) comprises a cohort of municipalities undertaking the process. We've completed work for the initial phase, which produced a greenhouse gas report for local municipal operations. Overall, our municipal footprint is relatively small, with landfill emissions estimated to be the largest component by far. After that, the heating system at town hall and the highway department fleet are our biggest emissions producers. Next step is a local Climate Action Plan for Amenia (GOCAP = Government Operations Climate Action Plan). We have a draft GOCAP and a presentation by which to begin the stakeholder engagement process. As a first step, Michael distributed copies of the draft GOCAP to the group for feedback. Michael will present to stakeholders including the town supervisor, town board, highway department and building department in the near future. Michael will also present to the CAPI cohort on behalf of Amenia at the April meeting. The plan will need to be adopted by the town by the end of June.

6. Upcoming Events

- Earth Day festivities will be held on Saturday, April 20, from 12-4pm at the Amenia Town Hall. Organized by Nancy in collaboration with our neighbors from Northeast/Millerton. Garden Club is hosting a presentation by the head gardener from Wethersfield in the auditorium.
- Annual Town Clean-up Day will be the following Saturday April 27 9am-12pm. Vicki will anchor operations at Fountain Square and Michael at Borden Park.
- Repair Café will be held the following Saturday, May 4
Nancy needs help! Michael has volunteered, but we'll need others... thanks!

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Peek, Chair
Conservation Advisory Council

Approved: _____ Date: _____