

Town of New Paltz
Environmental Conservation Board
December 3, 2014
Community Center
7:30 pm

Participants: Mike Domitrovits, Jim Littlefoot, Norman Turner, Joe Bergstein, Libby Murphy,
Perry Goldschein, Rhett Weires, Laura DeNey

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

Agenda:

Review/Approval of November Meeting Minutes: No printout available. Tabled until next meeting.

Public Comment

Plastic Bag Ban - John Ferro, New Paltz resident and Poughkeepsie Journal environmental reporter, asked about where the EnCB stands on the issue of a plastic-bag ban going into effect in April. While we have varying individual viewpoints, the idea has been tabled for the time being. Norman has emailed with Dan Torres on the subject, who indicated that he did not think the town would support the idea while a related lawsuit has been filed against Hastings in Westchester County. Dan suggested a possible public referendum. Rhett: the idea is not to be afraid of threats of litigation, but it is prudent to wait for the outcome of a pending action before going forward.

105 Route 208 Application - Eric Stutt, of 28 Cedar Ridge Rd., spoke at length in opposition to the application, seeking to protect his and neighboring properties from inappropriate further development. Formerly heavily wooded, the land has become too saturated to use. Trees began dying in about 2006. Post holes fill quickly with stagnant, smelly water. Water runoff from Hawk Drive now comes through a culvert onto the 2 lots proposed for development above his and neighbors' properties on its way to the Wallkill river. He was advised by Ulster County Soil and Water in 2009 to build bermes, which he did to no effect. Mr. Stutt presented photos of flooding after the July 2 storm that overwhelmed culverts on his neighbor Looft's property. The houses were unreachable by emergency vehicles. SUNY is not required to ameliorate the situation. Any development – cutting trees, adding steep driveways, septic fields, etc. – will worsen the situation to the point that the land will be useless. The threat is both immediate and long-term.

Planning Board Projects Status:

105 Route 208 Application – Rhett spoke with the Planning Board's attorney, who said that, contrary to the legal assertion of Mr. Eriole, the developer's attorney, the application submitted in January was not complete because a permit from the Town Board is required to develop on such a steep slope. According to the zoning law, these must be submitted to our board for review. Norman spoke to Dave Clouser, who said the developer was amending the plan on March 17, and the revised plan still did not include the permit. So the 45-day time period should not start in January, which is the developer's contention. Norman also asked Kelly and Mike, who confirmed that the

developer does need a steep-slope permit. Rhett: Given that the town has no control over the college, which has poor stormwater management practices and will continue to develop, it makes no sense to develop these properties due to the huge environmental impact, erosion etc. Libby: If the area is MS4-designated, those guidelines would probably prohibit development anyway. Now that we have been officially notified to make comment (through email to Rhett and verbal communication with Laura), as liaison we have until mid-January to respond. Eric Stutt offered to forward the soil report. Norman will write a brief letter to be voted on next meeting.

Tree Removal Application at 12 Van Alst Street – Norman made a motion to approve it conditional on the homeowner replacing the tree. Jim seconded. All in favor.

Wildberry Lodge – Engineer Jane Samuelson is present to discuss our comments. She asked if there are other entities in town using our green suggestions, such as permeable parking lots, so she can point to them as examples. Libby: SUNY has both types and the difference can be seen clearly when it rains. They put them in about 5 years ago and there are others in the Hudson Valley that are 30 years old. They last longer. Norman asked if the town wetlands inspector had been out to the property recently. Jane: He was there 5-6 years ago when another project was under consideration. Norm: Permeable surfaces should be used on the tennis courts too. Libby: It is a prime property for permeable materials given its flatness. Also good for rain gardens. Jane indicated that the water would come from onsite wells which yield about 100 g a minute. Laura asked what is meant by recycled water and what happens to the water that is not recycled. Jane said that a tour of the Rocking Horse Ranch and Splashdown facilities would help answer those questions.

Libby: we were not clear what was being proposed for wastewater treatment. Jane: we are going to study both onsite options and alternative offsite possibilities. The Ohioville facility already has a plan to upgrade. Jane asked Libby to send link about Bard College's new environmentally sound wastewater system.

The Thruway has said no way to a separate entrance road leading off the exit area. Perry asked about shuttles to reduce traffic. Libby: New Paltz has been designated a Climate Smart community by the DEC and pledged to reduce greenhouse gases. Increased traffic is a challenge to that plan. A possible electric car charging station was brought up.

Jane: more testing has been done on the soil and a remediation plan to remove or cap contaminated soil is being developed. It is all pesticide-, not petroleum-based.

Libby brought up the “wow” factor, that the Lodge will be the first thing visitors see of New Paltz and could be an eco-friendly showpiece. It is also the last large commercial property in town. Jim will send Jane a list of tree plantings for when they arrive at that stage of planning.

Mohonk Foothills Addendum addressing lawful segmentation documentation from counsel and engineer – Open Space Institute wants to split off and retain 19 acres on opposite side of Buttersville Rd. having high residential value. Our question is what plan is there for the parcel?

ENCB liason report of Planning Board meeting (Laura): Debate over the 105 State Route 208

application took up most of the time. A yoga center will be going in the former Jamaica Choice restaurant location in the New Paltz Plaza. Other topics included the New Hampton Inns crosswalk, solar zoning amendment, buyback from central Hudson, whether we need new codes. The 2nd meeting of each month is now going to be a workshop meeting, leaving the lengthy applications for the 1st meeting.

Discussions:

Check with Stacy as to whether the town granted the tree removal permit to Shivertown Road applicant as it has been observed that the trees are now down.

Ulster County Environmental Management Council Meeting Report (Jim): Jim no longer present to give report; left early.

Parking Lots Subcommittee update (Joe): Had a discussion with Dave Clouser re the need to get a stormwater plan in place as per MS4 regulations. Possible joint meeting scheduled of the EnCB and the Planning Board. Mike: The town should put together some informational meetings regarding MS4. Rhett: we are not the first municipality to face MS4 transition. Someone could be retained to organize such meetings. Norman: Wouldn't Clouser be the one to get us up to code on MS4?

New Business: None.

Mike made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laura seconded it. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.