

Town of New Paltz
Environmental Conservation Board
March 29, 2017
Community Center
7:30pm

Participants: Laura deNey, Ingrid Haeckel, Joe Bergstein, Andy Ashton, Jim Littlefoot, Noel Russ, Susan Wile, note taker

Public Comment: One dozen New Paltz High School Students attending as participants in PIG (Participation in Government), without comment.

Mike D. absent because of funeral and is unable to continue acting as chair due to his commitments. He proposed Laura to chair. Laura & Ingrid would like to co-chair. Noel will develop contact list with emails and phone & cell numbers. January minutes were approved during February meeting. February minutes were approved by all.

Andy attended recent Planning Board meeting:

1. There was little public comment, with one regarding the CVS assessment and whether it was a quality vernal pool. There was also a project review of the Brouck Ferris development since the site plan was changed. The new site plan relocates the primary well out of the wetland buffer. The original wellsite has been reserved as a back-up in case the new one doesn't produce and the entry road moved fifty feet on 299. Although still in the buffer, it is further from the wetland. Buffer areas important around wetlands – transition zone for wildlife, can change over time. Helps protect wetland over time. The draining is now more of a cut and there is uncertainty how to cut and get water up in the basin.
2. There was an extensive discussion of EnCB letter with a number of new items the applicant/developer needs to address; 1.) A supplemental traffic study is necessary due to new layout of carwash; 2.) Well testing plan through dept. of health as well as contacting homeowners to inquire if they want their wells tested with plans submitted to the planning board; 3.) Clear up the confusion about snow removal regarding the fifty year event. They have a fifty year rain event and want to extrapolate snow removal from this. 4.) Developer is still trying to use 299 as main entrance/exit and is in discussions with the carwash owner, and needs to apply for a zoning variance for an easement here. 5.) There is a new buried fire suppression tank. 6.) Building size has not been reduced. 6.) There are no elevators and laundry is in the basement. 7.) Request made that developer researches an above ground septic system. They feel their solution is sound, but there continues to be skepticism about this. 8.) They also need to come back to the board with similar developments in NYS/region as a comparison regarding parking footprint.
3. Regarding CVS, the Planning Board voted against doing a full environmental review and felt fill and grading was overkill. EnCB has concerns regarding where CVS will get fill and what it might contain. Nothing has changed with what CVS is proposing and grading is a concern. Regarding building design, New Paltz has no design standards. The Historic Society advises builders to check out Mohonk Mountain house and Huguenot Street.
4. Regarding Wildberry Lodge, Steve Turk presented revised plan. He has cut hotel size, added natural features, butterfly conservatory, and outdoor amphitheater to make it more appealing to the town. Laura suggests we call him to come and present to EnCB. Need early conversations about storm drainage and green infrastructure.

Jim is a member of Ulster County Conservation Board and attended recent meeting:

1. A John Burroughs Natural History Society member was present and is willing to do a wildlife count here. There have been problems with developers cutting down trees that are home to bats. The Society wants to pass a law that no trees can be cut in June and July because bat pups are flightless during this time. The state is very concerned about the northern long eared bat, which is a true

rooster, with females giving birth in late May-early June when the young cannot fly. It has winter hibernation in Rosendale and Kingston. The DEC recommends protecting anything within a quarter mile of the bat's habitat. Although not stated in New Paltz law, EnCB will make a recommendation to the town for tree removal guidelines. It is not known if bats prefer specific trees. Follow up with DEC is recommended as well as tree inventory.

2. There are pages of notes about tree removal, but an ignorance of the law, typical of New Paltz ordinances. Tree cutting regulations have been on the books since 2011. Zoned for residential property, one cannot cut within fifty five feet of midrib, commercial is seventy five feet with exemptions for storm damage, public endangerment, etc.
3. Joe drafted a one page PSA extracted from town code to be posted on town website and placed in public locations. Stacey would share with prospective developers and the town board. Joe will streamline the PSA for the public making it easier to read and stressing that the permit is FREE, as well as the law's importance. Posting on social media is also recommended. Suggestion made to recommend a statement in town code about an added restriction regarding tree removal in June and July due to the bat situation.

Joint Meeting for EnCB with Planning Board set for April 24. EnCB members to attend Planning Board meeting as follows:

1. April 13—Joe
2. May 8 – Mike
3. June 12 – Susan
4. July 10 – Noel
5. August 14 – Ingrid
6. September 11 – Andy
7. October 12 – Jim
8. November 13 – Laura
9. December 11 – Mike D.

Next meeting for EnCB is April 19.

Ingrid will send Habitat Assessment for review. It is possible that EnCB plays a role for town to include Habitat Assessment Guidelines. Joint meeting with planning board about this is scheduled for April 24.

NEW BUSINESS:

Review of plan by owner/farmer to build four houses in flood plain for agricultural employees on Springtown Rd. for use as organic farm. It is in zone AE, which is the inundation zone. Buildings appear to be in flood fringe zone, spanning either side of Springtown and in the hundred-year flood plain. The law dictates it is not for building, with possible exemption being agriculture. Three different zones are listed. Is there a minimum elevation in our flood plain regulations?

1. Nothing is indicated in plan for septic.
2. Alarm system for employees should be required for emergencies
3. Does flood plain law prohibit new construction?
4. Flood elevation is 186.5 and buildings are 188.5.
5. Property is in the wetlands and marked as such, but owner doesn't think he's in the wetlands. He'll have onsite drilled well and onsite wastewater disposal system.
6. A permit from highway and health dept. will be required

EnCB comments on permit/application about flood plain issue and request to know more about septic.

Susan Wile will become member of EnCB and provide background information to members.

Meeting adjourned at 9:22pm