

Town of New Paltz
Environmental Conservation Board
May 9, 2018
Community Center
7:30pm

Participants: Joe Bergstein, Rose Rudnitski, Janelle Peotter, Jim Littlefoot, Susan Wile, Kenji Tierney, Ingrid Haeckel, Amanda Gotto.

Meeting called to order at 7:46pm. Joe chairs meeting for Ingrid until she arrives.

All five members present approve April 11 minutes.

Public Comment: None

TREE PERMIT:

Stacey Delarede met with homeowner at 13 Duzine on April 30, who photographed a sick blue spruce. The tree is within the zone 34 feet from center of rd. The homeowner wants to substitute native evergreens and shrubs and is enthusiastic about beautifying area. All members approve request to remove tree on basis of proposed replanting plan.

PLASTIC STRAW CHALLENGE & PLASTIC BAG BAN:

Rose reads letter regarding plastic bag ban. Joe recommends Ingrid and Ted co-sign this letter to Dave Haldeman at Environmental Conservation Bd. of Ulster County. Letter should also go to New Paltz Times. Village passed a plastic bag ban, which has been effective. The town and county should follow suit. Letter should be sent from EnCB and EPB.

- On Earth Day, April 22, a notice went to 35 establishments in village reminding them of resolution passed by town and village.
- Restaurants have responded positively regarding the straw challenge. Need to focus on the big 3; McGillicutty's, Bacchus, and P&G's. The resolution was discussed with managers, but they need to be reminded. Laura DeNey suggested idea of bar crawl, reminding servers of no straws. EnCB discussed a public bar crawl with a set date and letter to New Paltz Times editor. Ingrid suggests following up with restaurants to see how it's going.
- Student PIGlets discussed doing art project with straws and using social media to keep the issue alive.
- A letter to Starbucks corporate will be drafted. Local supermarkets will be contacted as well.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FEASIBILITY UPDATE:

- Village Hall's parking lot area behind the fire department is one location being considered for feasibility study. Plattekill vicinity is another. Southside Ave and South Chestnut St. is another.
- 3 types of GI practices: storm water planters, street tree planting and raingarden.

NORTH PUTT TRAFFIC STUDY:

Jim presented the letter from Chris Marx to the Ulster County Conservation Bd. There was general confusion of the vehicle calculations, so Jim met with Chris to clarify the numbers and will return to the board for another review.

ROSE PROPOSES:

New Paltz to become “Bee City USA” to raise awareness of the plight of pollinators, specifically honey bees. Bee City USA provides resources and links and is endorsed by Chris Harp, foremost beekeeper in New Paltz. With an eye to banning neonicotinoids, and changing people’s mindset, Rose would like to discuss this with Neil Bettez. Ingrid requests that Rose make an outline of best practices. No community in New York State has a “Bee City USA” designation. Amanda suggests writing a letter of the primary things we are asking the town to do, outlining our role, i.e. what does the town bd. need to do and what are the actions the town needs to take?

CLIMATE ACTION UPDATE:

Per Janelle, in an effort to do integrated community outreach, there is a potluck May 11 to motivate community to take on big and little projects. There is a Green Business Initiative with Ulster County for anyone to become a Climate Action ambassador and get training to help businesses go green. The May 24 training is free from 6-8:30pm. The goal is to get at least 100 businesses to sign up for an energy audit, to retrofit, go solar, etc.

GATEWAY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE:

Per Amanda, the gateway area is in the highway/business district with a final report drafted in April (over 100 pages), with much background info. Restraints are on the scale of development with specific parameters. It has not been referred to the Planning bd. for comments yet. There is the possibility of a Gateway zoning amendment. Not sure if a public hearing date is set.

SOLAR ZONING CONSIDERATIONS:

Per Ingrid, NYSERDA rep (Candace Rossi) is coming on the 15th to discuss solar laws with CWOSP, EnCB and Planning Bd and Town bd. Ingrid is working on agenda with Kevin from CWSOP. Candice will give overview of the sun program and technical assistance available and walk everyone through the new model law. Ingrid is also putting a list of questions together.

Ingrid reviewed recommendations of discussion points from previous meetings. We want to provide incentives and require habitat assessments for largescale projects. We want to avoid conservation areas and forest clearing to the maximum extent possible. We want the visual impact of fencing considered. Joe suggests a prohibition on use of certain pesticides/herbicides in maintaining area. Do we want anything included to return the soil to original condition if it’s AG? What is the best strategy to incentivize solar? Do we want to identify an overlay zone , i.e. near high school. Is there a tax incentive possibility? Ingrid will get estimate for NRI.

Susan moves to approve Ingrid’s summary of general recommendations, Kenji seconds, and all approve.

Meeting adjourned 9:30pm.