

Town of New Paltz Environmental Conservation Board

Minutes for the meeting

December 16, 2020, 7:30pm

This meeting was held via teleconference and livestreamed at <https://youtu.be/DCd-kRX2N-E>

*PLEASE NOTE: Based on the New York State Governor's executive order Continuing Temporary Suspension and Modification of Laws Relating to the Disaster Emergency, the Town of New Paltz closed in-person access to meetings and authorizing that meetings be held remotely by conference call or similar service until further notice. Persons wishing to provide public comment can email encb@townofnewpaltz.org and the comments will be entered into the minutes.

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:33pm.

Participants: Ingrid Haeckel, Amanda Gotto, Janelle Peotter, Ted Nitza, Hope Nitza, Susan Stessin-Cohn, Rose Rudnitski, Yoni Schwartz, Kenji Tierney. Julie Seyfert-Lillis also attended a portion of the meeting.

Public Comment: None received by the meeting or offered at the meeting.

Approval of Minutes for November 11: T. Nitza moved to approve the minutes. Schwartz seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Agenda Change: Add HWD item after Planning Board. Add Planning Board Update from Susan. After Climate Smart, discussion of EnCB Chair. Add Annual Report Addition. Add discussion of meeting dates for 2021. All Items added.

Planning Board:

ZBA Appeal Update: Provided by Ingrid. All waiting for Dec 9 ZBA Meeting results, next steps. Stacy to clarify her position/ruling on the trail. She wishes to clarify her position, 'a waiver would still be necessary but in a site plan submittal/review'. Other questions raised by TransH attorney. Ingrid planning a letter response but needs Stacy revised position first. Discussion of concerns, issues surrounding the Appeal. Ingrid did a great job at this ZBA hearing. Rose asked if/what next steps. Ingrid planning a letter to review/respond to Stacy's planned clarification – but asking for EnCB member assistance in preparation. Schwartz suggested no such letter was necessary. Janelle agreed.

PB Liaison schedule:

January 11. Schwartz

January 25. Ingrid H.

Discussion Items:

HWD Project Letter. Ingrid noted T.Nitza wrote a draft letter response on behalf of the EnCB regarding the Draft Preliminary Plans. More information at: <https://walkbikehwd.weebly.com/>. The letter was viewed by the Zoom audience and briefed by T.Nitza. Intended to cover the items discussed so far. Rich thought the letter was good. Ingrid commented on the letter. Ingrid noted no property taking at this time; T.Nitza agreed. Replacement trees called for in the same project area. Amanda noted that CWOSP has suggested the pathway go into the Meadowbrook area, avoiding street area trees. Ingrid made changes to the draft letter as the meeting participants discussed/agreed. Susan asked when the project would be taking place (construction). T.Nitza suggested several months, into 2022 before construction starts; Kenji stated the website says Fall 2021. Janelle stressed the last paragraph about public participation is important. Rose moved to accept the letter. T.Nitza seconded. All voted in favor.

EnCB Annual Report. Ingrid shared a draft report for 2020 items of the EnCB. Developed from the minutes of each month. Corrections, updates, enhanced language on the plans for the Tree Law were added. Wetland brochure update planned. Community Preservation Fund details added. MS4 notes added to the Annual Report. T.Nitza moved to approve the Annual Report. Schwartz second. All voted in favor.

Critical Environmental Areas proposal. Ingrid anticipates a presentation in January, but TBD. Ingrid also plans to report back to the Town Board at the Dec 17th meeting. Ingrid reported that a presentation was given to the Town Board at Dec. 3 Town Board meeting. Guest speaker, Michael Dupree – Town of Hyde Park Planning Board Chair, did a good job. Ingrid feels that the Town Board wants to move forward, but with Planning Board agreement. Dupree has offered to present to the Planning Board also. Julie praised Ingrid's effort. Ingrid proposed to reduce the CEA areas to increase the chances of approval. Not move forward with the Swartekill Wetland areas and Stonykill Woods. Julie and Yoni stated their agreement with reducing the size of the areas (stated as a % of all land in the Town). Ingrid estimated 2200 acre reduction from the removal of the two areas. 7900 acres in the CEAs would remain proposed. Lengthy discussion was conducted. Ingrid moved to continue the CEA with the 4 remaining areas in the Town. Susan seconded. The EnCB was reminded that the Village plans a similar CEA effort at/in/around the Mill Brook Preserve. Rose called for a vote (and end to discussion). All voted in favor.

Wetland Law Discussion with Town officials. Zoom meeting planned to discuss the overall process of the wetland law and how it applied to the current cases in progress. Ingrid and T.Nitza attending. Town, Planning Board, others planning to attend. Law is confusing. Building Inspector (Stacy) to be asked to explain, update the group.

Village EPB update. Ted provided an update: Most recent EPB meeting was Dec 8th. 2 proposed residential houses on Millbrook Road was presented/discussed by the Village EPB. Bee City is now an eco-scaping effort in front of the Village Hall was discussed. Leaf blower ordinance being discussed. Riley P. as an intern for EPB; could help EnCB also. In 2021, the meetings will be on the second Tuesday at 5:30pm; all Zoom until June (and then to be reassessed). Joint meetings will be planned for 2021.

Climate Smart Update. Janelle provided the Annual Report previously. She indicated the next Book Club selection, “*All We Can Save*”. All are welcome.

NRI project update. Amanda provided an update. Town presentation planned for March. Also noted the Floodplain Maps can be used by the Town if they choose.

EnCB Chair Update: Ingrid noted that Rich has expressed interest, but is busy now. Ingrid has agreed to stay on as Chair until March.

EnCB Schedule for 2021. Only one Zoom Account for this use. So, EnCB will be on the third Wednesday of the month at same time, 7:30pm.

Other EnCB Projects: were not discussed

- Wetlands Law brochure
- Tree Law review

Announcements: None.

Ted moved to adjourn. Kenji seconded. All voted in favor

Meeting ended at approximately 9:30pm

Minutes prepared by T.Nitza

Approved February 17, 2021