Town of New Paltz Environmental Conservation Board September 12, 2018

Community Center

Participants: Ingrid Haeckel, Noel Russ, Rose Rudnitski, Jim Littlefoot, Kenji Tierney, Janelle Peotter; Joe arrived 7:45; Ted arrived 8:30.

Meeting called to order 7:38pm

**Public Comment: None**

**Approval of August 8 minutes: 5 yes, 1 abstain (Rose) –with amendment to add Jim**

**Planning Board Projects:**

TransHudson/CVS

* Did not submit comments on latest submission in time for 9-13 meeting. Discussed at 8-8 meeting; our position remains the same. Discussed whether to reiterate main concerns during public comment.
* Status of Gateway rezoning per Ingrid’s conversation with Neil Bettez is stalled; waiting on additional studies to be completed.
* Ingrid will attend and reiterate that PB should push for changes to the site layout to preserve some Thruway tree buffer, put parking in back of buildings with more green infrastructure

DB Orchards Farm Market

* New farm market in parking lot next to Living Seed Yoga on Rt 299; no comment

**Discussion Items:**

EMC update (Jim)

* EMC’s letter on the Army Corps Barrier Proposal – Ingrid will circulate for comments. Please review.
* Plastic bag ban at county was tabled (until 2020?). Now called BYOB act – bring your own bag.
* Straw ban: county likes idea, but want more info about non-plastic straw options. Has been tabled.

Saw Mill Brook water testing (Ingrid)

* Agreed at last meeting to propose spending to cover 2 tests; Ingrid has not received any additional requested details to make budget request since then. Need to know the main questions we are trying to answer, explain why the specific tests are warranted, how we will use the results. Noel knows about this sort of water testing and can reach out to the Saw Mill Brook watershed alliance folks to sort out these questions. He has a background in environmental chemistry.

Weed killer next steps (Joe)

* Neil’s letter to Lowes Sustainability Director re: Glyphosate from 2 months ago (after July 19) has received no response. Basil Seggos and Pete Lopez were CC’d, also did not respond.
* EnCB could still do a lot in terms of a public info campaign. Letter to editor of NP Times
* On Aug 10th plaintiff awarded in lawsuit against Monsanto/Bayer for Glyphosate-related cancer.
* IUCS has determined it is a possible carcinogen. Being phased out in EU. Thinks we should encourage precautionary approach.
* Jim: someone has been posting “Do not buy: deadly” by Roundup products at Lowes.
* Owner of Truevalue in Stone Ridge on Route 209 has stopped selling Glyphosate.
* Town of Olive may have ordinance banning Glyphosate (from DEP?)
* Joe would like to incorporate mention of Stone Ridge Truevalue to letter; any revisions we suggest.
* Janelle suggests we request a full article to include details; otherwise shorten it for letter to editor.
* Rose: send article to the Oracle (SUNY newspaper) and high school paper if it exists.
* Homework: review letter and resolution and submit comments to Joe within 2 weeks.

Tree Law Letter

* Ingrid suggests we re-send last year’s Tree Law letter.
* Ted made motion to resend letter; Kenji 2nd – all in favor (8) – motion passed.

Bee City USA (Rose)

* Plains Rd tree cutting issues for water district – old locust trees are important for bees.
* Process for Bee City: Advertise with local organizations and get endorsement letters. Already miles ahead other places because New Paltz does not use neonicotinoids. Xerxes society concerned with native pollinators and wild animals –hummingbirds, bats.
* Should show that constituents support –garden club, Climate Action Coalition, Village EPB, Chamber of Commerce, etc. – send sample endorsement letters.
* Should involve village; population of both fall within the fee of $200.
* Education on pollinator-friendly plants – list from Xerxes society of native pollinators.
* Ingrid: put together list of groups to seek endorsements from.

Climate Smart Communities grant, Green Business Initiative update (Janelle)

* Talked further with Jason West about doing the Climate Action Plan as part of his Master’s degree.
* Zero Emissions parade and green vendor fair on Saturday
* Parade at 11 (Middle School parking lot to Village Hall)
* Monthly task force meeting on Monday.

Awareness and Collaboration Report from the Village's Environmental Policy Board (Ted)

* Attended joint Town-Village board meeting, discussed septic relief along tributary 13 to help water quality efforts. Putting in sewers in areas with failing septics to clean up watersheds.
* EPB working on study to ID areas currently served with sanitary sewers and areas just beyond that could be served – expand public sewer in areas where cost-effective and with water quality benefits.
* Riverkeeper annual results – Trib 13 one of highest contributors to Wallkill pollution.
* EPB working on rewrite of Village’s plastic bag ban. Hope that Ulster County’s law will eventually pass. Tightening up village law’s language.
* Intern completed reed bed system review –status of WWTP sludge digesting process. Identified 3 things that prevent it from being effective on a wider scale. Space the main limitation. The reed is now considered an invasive species. American variety is not as effective. Moving forward, need to go through a management plan for reed system. Simply not enough space to use it on a larger scale though.
* Methane to energy feasibility study – use digester methane, capturing it and extracting energy. Currently the methane is flared/burned.
* Reaching out to New Paltz high school to get a junior member.
* Transhudson/CVS water connection – estimates were about 50% off. If they want Village water/sewer, probably going to have higher consumption.
* Paint swap operation – Village is low on paint, seeking donations.

Critical Environmental Areas (Ingrid)

* Has explored options of delineating potential CEAs for the Shawangunk Ridge west of Butterville Rd, the Wallkill floodplain/flats, and northeast woods and wetlands.
* Should boundaries follow roads/property lines, or be based on ecological limits? Seems that broader areas bordered by roads would be clearer to interpret.
* Will try to provide some draft options for next meeting.

**Announcements**:

LHCCD Stormwater Conference in Beacon, Oct. 17

Ted – just heard a request for open bonfire at Hasbrouck Park. Bonfires have significant air pollution issues.

Don Kerr plans to ask for funding to help sample Trib 13.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40pm.