Town of New Paltz Environmental Conservation Board May 8, 2019 Community Center 7:30pm

Participants: Ingrid Haeckel, Kenji Tierney, Rose Rudnitski (via telephone), Ted Nitza, Jim Littlefoot, Jonathan (Yoni) Schwartz, Amanda Gotto (liaison from Planning Bd.), Janelle Peotter arrived a little late, Susan Wile, and prospective member Rich Whitney.

Public Comments: None Meeting called to order at 7:36pm

April 3 Minutes – Ingrid moves to approve. 4 approve, 0 abstentions.

April 17 minutes – Yoni moves to approve. 4 approve, 0 abstentions.

**PLANNING BOARD PROJECTS:**

* **Cragswood** on agenda for Monday with recommendation that Planning bd. approves, with conditions; fencing and pool cover. EnCB won’t submit further comments at this point.
* **New Subdivision in the flood plain** (Dug Rd. & Springtown) subdividing the horse farm to create two lots; one would be 10.6 acre parcel, the other 8.1 acres. The 10.6 parcel will remain a horse farm. Amanda recommends we don’t comment yet. Parcel 2 would be in the floodplain. Nancy to attend Planning Bd. on Monday.
* **Conceptual Subdivision** on Burleigh Road of L shaped property. It appears they want to cut off the L. Total acreage is 7.83, currently zoned A3.
* **Ferris Woods Apartments.** The revised plans indicate one building removed and is now four, two-story apartment buildings with 12 units each. To date, a SEQR has not been executed. Revised plan indicates putting wells in the wetland buffer. Amanda proposed another site visit. They had a wetlands review but never issued a formal NOD, (Notice of Determination). Ingrid will ask Pat for another EnCB site visit.
* **New Paltz Storage** at 111 Henry W. Dubois needs a wetlands inspection. There are 3 different kinds of wetlands here with owner proposing to turn one wetland into a water quality basin. Although not increasing parking, he wants to build on top of a mapped ACOE wetlands. There are also DEC wetlands and buffers. EnCB concerned about converting wetlands to water quality basin because the area drains to Trib 13. Ingrid suggests submitting early comments, and will draft letter requesting opportunity for a site visit with wetland inspector.
* **Wildberry Lodge** has completed an environmental impact statement, which the Planning Bd. must review to determine its adequacy and whether it meets the requirements of the scoping document. There is a great deal missing according to the attorney. Yoni reviewed the scoping document and noted contradictions, making it difficult to determine the difference between the original and the preferred plan. Ingrid suggests spending more time with this at the June meeting. EnCB needs time for more thorough review and comment. Ingrid asks Yoni to draft a letter on the difficulty of separating the original plan from the revised plan with a need to restructure. Kenji makes motion with Rose seconding, all in favor for Yoni to write letter to the Planning bd.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

* **Bee City USA** (Rose): Rachel Lagodka drafted letter to the Village bd. regarding legalizing bee keeping in the village. Rose also signed. Ingrid approved.
* **CEA** (Ingrid): Received 3 comments via email; two asked to add areas to designation, particularly Swartekill wetland. There is justification for *not* adding the Swartekill wetland. It was originally reviewed, discussed and a decision was made to take no action. The purpose of the CEA is to document significant/critical habitat, and the board feels there should be a high standard of significance for inclusion in a CEA. Other areas may nevertheless have sensitive or important resources that warrant attention, and there are ways to address those through Planning Board reviews. Ingrid met Neil yesterday, who is comfortable moving forward, after Gateway business is wrapped, pending addressing comments from Planning Board attorney Rick Golden about the large size of the CEA areas. Suggestion made to reissue Ingrid’s letter to the editor on CEA’s in July before the August Public hearing.
* **County Update from Neil** (Ingrid): Orange county legislature passed a resolution to allow all towns within the county to develop community preservation funds. Warwick and Red Hook have used it to protect hundreds of acres. A percentage of monies from a home sale goes to the town fund, to be used for open space preservation and/or easements. There is willingness to approve this resolution in Ulster County. Jim Delaune, Ulster county legislator wants it as does Neil, as a means to fund the open space fund, since the tax cap has impacted town’s ability to use bond monies.
* **EPB** (Ted): Tried to meet last month but didn’t have a quorum. They will also postpone tomorrow’s meeting due to lack of quorum. Still trying to resolve plastic bags, with the village investigating the sludge cake waste material. According to the DEC, the new state law restricting plastic bags preempts local governments adding their laws. The town would have to pass a new law by March 2020, before the state law goes into effect. The EPB has another opening since their current high school member is graduating and heading to college. Regarding the Trib 13 sampling budget, EPB will commit $230 to sample.
* **County Environmental Management Council** (Jim): The Taylor-Montgomery company, currently building a plant in Montgomery has invented a zero-emission system that extracts all emissions from the breakdown of products such as sheet rock, with whatever’s left over recyclable and the by-product usable as fertilizer. Taylor wants to build a plant in Ulster County. Jim suggests that Taylor make a presentation to the EnCB, Planning Bd. and Village Bd.
* **SUNY Update** (Yoni): Met with John Shupe re parking and inquiry on where the Sawmill Brook runs and feeds into college and through the campus. SUNY expanded the original parking lot buffer at EnCB’s request and planted Norway spruce. Last fall a student developed a stream buffer planting plan, but there has been no implementation yet. Ingrid suggests follow up letter. In addition, the presence of beavers is creating boggy playing fields on the SUNY campus with the potential for their dam to break and flood houses. Yoni and John also discussed the possibility for the college to help with overflow parking at Wildberry Lodge with a shuttle for Wildberry guests.
* Climate Smart Update (Janelle): This Friday is the annual potluck at St. Josephs that starts at 6-8. Amanda and Janelle will present greenhouse gas inventory. Running through task force with work of 8 subcommittees. Began a meet-up group, with first meeting last night. The issue was how to implement climate smart into lifestyle. 19 attended. Climate Smart formally joined the Chamber of Commerce. Making good connections with business community and looking for avenues into other demographics.
* CCA “Community Choice Aggregation” (Janelle): means you can pick your electricity supplier (though Central Hudson would still deliver). This would be a way for an entire community to be climate smart. The Village bd. passed a CCA law and is looking into this. Only two CCA’s can provide power for our municipality with option for homeowner to opt-out. Town bd. has a hearing at next meeting on this issue with a public hearing scheduled May 16. Ingrid might be able to attend. Ingrid suggests taking a vote in support, with Janelle to draft a letter that EnCB signs for presentation at the public hearing. Rose makes motion, Kenji approves, all in favor for Janelle to draft letter to be circulated to EnCB by Sunday.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

* Ingrid is undergoing standard ethics review at DEC for outside activity and reiterates her limitations in participation to avoid conflict of interest. Town cannot have advantage with Ingrid being on the EnCB board for grants or permits. Hudson River estuary grants specific issue - Ingrid can’t be involved at all. Other areas that Ingrid will recuse from include Climate Smart Community grants, Hudson River Valley greenway grants and MS4 program.
* Ingrid leaves the room so Amanda can discuss last year’s grant application on the volunteer hours necessary to take a natural resource inventory. Last year EnCB was willing to contribute volunteers to gather and select photos of different zones. The inventory is like a CEA on steroids and would be a good thing for residents. A consultant would help pull this together with public hearings, reviews and comments on maps, and final reports to assure integration of priority areas. 212 hours of volunteer time for the project were estimated last year. Amanda is resubmitting the application due a missed deadline last year and will revise and send to all. Yoni will sign it, since Ingrid can’t.

Motion to adjourn 9:44pm