

Town of New Paltz Environmental Conservation Board
Annual Report of Activities
2019

Members: Ingrid Haeckel (Chair), Nancy Arias (resigned May), Joe Bergstein (resigned March), Jim Littlefoot, Ted Nitza, Janelle Peotter, Rose Rudnitski, Jonathan Schwartz, Susan Stessin, Kenji Tierney, and Rich Whitney

Project Review

- Reviewed all submissions referred by the Planning Board and provided written comments for the following projects:
 - o 46 Cragwood Rd wetlands/watercourse permit
 - o 147 Springtown Rd subdivision
 - o 175 and 177 Rose Ln steep slopes/clearing & grading permit
 - o Ferris Woods site plan
 - o Mid-Hudson Sporting Clays site plan
 - o New Paltz Storage site plan
 - o TowRific Auto site plan
 - o TransHudson/CVS site plan
 - o Wildberry Draft Environmental Impact Statement
- Attended site visits for the following projects:
 - o 46 Cragwood Rd (April 6)
 - o New Paltz Storage (June 3)
 - o Ferris Woods (June 19)
 - o 175 and 177 Rose Ln (July 13)
 - o TowRific (July 26)
- Sent liaison to Planning Board meetings as needed.

Chapter 130 - Tree Law

- EnCB received and approved one tree removal permit in 2019.

Policy Research and Development

- A proposal for establishing six Critical Environmental Areas was approved by the EnCB on March 14. Public outreach and publicity efforts were conducted beginning in late March, including:
 - o Presentation and discussion with the Town Planning Board on March 25
 - o Press release published in the New Paltz Times on April 4
 - o Presentation and discussion with the Town Board on April 4
 - o Flyers posted on public bulletin boards around town on April 5
 - o Public information session at the Community Center on April 10
 - o Front page article in the New Paltz Times published on April 11
 - o Information table at the Earth Day Fair on April 27

Three written public comments were received in addition to a memo provided by Planning Board attorney Richard Golden. Public input informed a revision to the proposal, approved by EnCB on October 16 and delivered to the Town Board. A presentation of the revised proposal to the Town Board is planned for January 2020.

- EnCB submitted recommendations to the Ulster County Legislature for amendments to the Bring Your Own Bag law. EnCB conducted additional research on the feasibility of local plastic bag regulation in the context of new statewide regulation of plastic bags. EnCB approved a set of recommendations for Town law regarding reusable bags and regulating the use of plastic carryout bags and recyclable paper carryout bags.
- EnCB wrote a letter to Senator Metzger, Assemblyperson Cahill, and Governor Cuomo in support of legislation to extend the Hudson Valley Community Preservation Act to Ulster County. The legislation was signed into law in early December and EnCB convened a meeting of representatives of local boards and commissions to update the Town Open Space Plan and pursue establishment of a Community Preservation Fund to finance local open space and historic preservation efforts.
- EnCB wrote a letter of support for the Gateway zoning updates and offered suggestions for strengthening environmental considerations.
- EnCB presented public comment to the Town Board in support of Community Choice Aggregation.

Education and Awareness

- Joe Bergstein published a public service announcement in the New Paltz Times on the importance of routine testing of private drinking water wells.
- Ingrid Haeckel presented a “Salamander Story Time” program at Elting Library on March 16, attended by 12 children and their parents/care-givers.
- Rose Rudnitski and Rachel Lagodka (Village EPB) conducted pollinator awareness outreach at the Earth Day fair and met with the Garden Club. Rose continued to research Bee City USA designation in the interest of raising awareness about conserving habitat for native pollinators.
- SUNY New Paltz completed a riparian buffer restoration planting next to the new parking lot on Route 32 in response to EnCB advocacy in 2018.

Representation on other committees

- Jim Littlefoot represents the Town on the Ulster County Environmental Management Council, attending monthly meetings and sharing and receiving information.
- Ted Nitza Chairs the Village of New Paltz Environmental Policy Board and serves as a liaison between the Town and Village on environmental policy.
- Ted Nitza is Co-Chair of the Town Solar Zoning Law Committee and Janelle Peotter is a member. In addition, a small Ad hoc group was formed within this Solar Law Committee to assist the Town in pursuing a solar energy project at the Town landfill.
- Janelle Peotter is the Climate Smart Coordinator for both the Town and Village of New Paltz and she is the chairperson for the New Paltz Climate Smart Task Force. She is also a member of the New Paltz Bicycle Pedestrian Committee, Ad Hoc Solar Law Committee, a Green Business Challenge Ambassador and a board member of the Climate Action Coalition.
- Susan Stessin is the Town Historian and Chair of the New Paltz Historical Society

Additional activities

- EnCB held joint meetings with the Village Environmental Policy Board in March and October to foster collaboration.
- EnCB members participated in a Tributary 13 Source Tracking meeting in March and assisted with development of the 2019 season water quality sampling plan.
- Maintained GIS software and data on Town B-fund laptop.
- Received approval for renewal (and upgrade of) low-cost (\$200) GIS license from ESRI's Conservation Program in October.

Annual report approved by the Environmental Conservation Board on December 11, 2019.

Respectfully submitted to the Town Board and NYSDEC Commissioner Basil Seggos.

Ingrid Haeckel
Chair, Town of New Paltz Environmental Conservation Board