

Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon

Minutes for August 12, 2019, New Lebanon Town Hall

Present: CAC members Cynthia Creech, David Farren, Bob Gilson, Peg Munves, Steve Powers

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 P.M. We approved the meeting minutes for July 8, 2019, to be posted on the town's web site by the Town Clerk.

We reviewed the raptor presentation at the Summer Recreation Program in Shatford Park on August 2. Michael Clough of the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum in West Marlboro, Vermont, brought four birds with him and presented for an hour and a half after lunch to all the campers in the park pavilion. Cynthia Creech, Peg Munves and Steve Powers attended and gave rave reviews. Steve took many photos and we will feature the CAC-sponsored event in the next town newsletter. The kids were knowledgeable and engaged and the camp requested a return visit next year. Many thanks to Paul Rix for arranging the presentation. David Farren will follow up with Michael Clough about his invoice. Also, David picked up a free copy of the Columbia County *2018 Natural Resources Inventory* at the CLC in Chatham, to be shared among CAC members, and returned the town's copy to the Town Clerk's office.

We discussed Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) briefly. Cynthia pointed out that the cool ravines on Paul St. Germain's property off Pool Hill Road extend down to Main Street in Lebanon Springs. Peg suggested meeting at 6:00 P.M. to visit that site before a monthly meeting. Again, we concurred that areas with extensive aquifers, the Little Knob and other unfragmented forests, certain ponds including the Shaker Swamp, cool ravines, riparian corridors with ancient forest patches, and hedge rows on agricultural lands are all potential CEAs.

David has had no luck recovering the Gaia GPS program that Craig Westcott purchased in December 2017. He and Steve Powers will get together within the week to survey the scenic viewsheds we had identified in the western part of town that were not included in the *2017 Natural Resource Conservation Plan* due to its imminent publication. Once we update the Scenic Resources map, to include roads, we will create an interactive inventory on the town's web site.

We continued our review of the Action Plan in the *2005 Comprehensive Plan* and agreed that we should complete the task at our September meeting.

Bob Gilson plans to attend the Planning Board meeting on August 21. We are not aware of any pending proposals that require site visits by the CAC.

The Zoning Rewrite Committee's recommended changes to the zoning ordinances are still awaiting review by the Town Attorney. Meanwhile, a first meeting of the expanded ZRC, to include four community members selected after interviews, has been scheduled for September 17 to begin addressing a revision of the *2005 Comprehensive Plan*

The next monthly meeting for the CAC will be Monday, September 9, 2019, starting at 6:30 P.M. at the New Lebanon Town Hall. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by David Farren