

Conservation Advisory Council, Town of New Lebanon

Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 14, 2016, Samson Environmental Center, Darrow School

Attendees: Cynthia Creech, David Farren, Jack Lancto, Craig Westcott (had to depart early)

Guest: Peg Munves

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 P.M.

Peg Munves has expressed interest in joining the CAC. She has owned her home on Dermody Road since 1989 and became a full-time resident two years ago, starting a dog-training business. We invited her to attend the Wednesday morning Hands to Work session at Darrow.

We reviewed developments at the previous Town Board meeting on March 8 and noted that the board approved the Hudsonia contract at the February 9 meeting. At the March 8 meeting, by a 2-2 vote, the Town Board failed to endorse a third climate change resolution introduced by Bruce Shenker. The two members who voted against explained that they believe the Town Board should not dictate approaches to climate change to town residents.

The CAC agreed to co-sponsor the solar energy forums that are contemplated. Cynthia Creech would build time into the agenda for the CAC to update attendees on the progress of our Natural Resources Conservation Plan (NRCP). We discussed other venues for informing the public about our progress, such as the town picnic and the town newsletter, and agreed that Gretchen Stevens would be the best source for suggestions on content for articles, flyers and posters. We also discussed the upcoming need to gain landowner consent to on-site visits for verifying findings from the NRCP mapping project.

David Farren provided an update on the NRCP mapping project. On December 16, Gretchen Stevens and Conrad Vispo led the introductory session during the morning Hands to Work session at Darrow. Claudia Vispo also attended. Since January 6, we have met every Wednesday morning at Darrow's Samson Environmental Center to map ancient forest patches and water resources in town using the QGIS program. Two Darrow students, Darrow staff Craig Westcott and Caleb Corliss and David Farren are regulars, often guided by Conrad and Gretchen. We have discovered many unmapped intermittent streams, woodland pools and even wetlands in addition to possible ancient forest patches. As it turns out, the existing hydrology maps of New Lebanon are unreliable.

David Farren used Craig Westcott's computer connected to the projector to demonstrate how we use QGIS in the mapping project, but not without hitches.

The next CAC meeting was scheduled for April 11 at 6:30 P.M. at the Samson Environmental Center at Darrow School. However, on that date David Farren will be in Washington, D.C. The meeting should be rescheduled.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

(Respectfully submitted by David Farren)