

**Dryden Conservation Board
November 27, 2018**

Members Present: Mike Richmond (Deputy Chair), Craig Schutt, Gian Dodici, Tim Woods, Bob Beck, Jeanne Grace, Steve Bissen and (at 7:25) Nancy Munkenbeck.

Liaisons: David Weinstein (Planning Board)

Guests: Alice Green (Town Board) and Terry Carroll (CCE Tompkins)

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Review and approval of minutes from October 30, 2018

C. Schutt made a motion to approve the October 30, 2018 minutes, seconded by B. Beck, S. Bissen abstained since he was not present at the last meeting, unanimously approved by remaining board members.

Reports and updates

Planning Board – D. Weinstein

See attached report. Planning Board members tried to put together a list of the issues they wanted to have special time to discuss apart from any proposal or permit. Asked the board to review the list and see if there are any topics on the Planning Board list that the Conservation Board feels they should also get involved in. For example, a town-wide ordinance against building on slopes 15 degrees or more. The Comprehensive Plan discourages but doesn't prohibit building on these types of slopes.

Discussion ensued regarding the State laws and the type of things this Board would need a resolution from the Town Board to allow us to weigh in on certain topics. A. Green advised the Town Board does appreciate the input from our advisory committees and boards. Money has been allocated in the 2019 budget to update the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, and they will be looking for input from all the boards/committees.

Environmental Management Council (EMC) -S. Bissen

The 4th batch of changes to Unique Natural Areas (UNAs) boundaries was brought before the EMC for comment. S. Bissen provided copies of the maps and asked the Board to review and let him know before December 13th if there are any questions, concerns or comments.

Dryden Rail Trail – B. Beck

The third of the three kiosks have been installed. This completes what needed to be done for the AARP grant, other than the report that A. Green and B. Beck will be completing by next Monday to send AARP.

Agricultural Advisory Committee – C. Schutt

See attached report from November 14, 2018 meeting.

New Business

Climate Smart Communities (CSC)

A. Green gave background on this program that DEC made available back in 2016. D. Cipolla-Dennis registered our Town to do the steps of the program. J. Wilson (Planning Board) connected A. Green with T. Carroll (CCE Tompkins Clean Energy Communities Coordinator) and after meeting with T. Carroll, it turned out that there was a Clean Energy Grant waiting for us to complete some steps. We received word that we qualified for a \$5,000 grant.

The things that we needed to do to qualify for the Clean Energy Grant were simple:

- 1) Our code enforcement officers had already attended a training in clean energy work;
- 2) Adopted the NYS Unified Solar Application (which just took a resolution);
- 3) Passed a resolution that beginning in January, our staff will note utility bills when they come in and begin charting the energy use of all our municipal buildings in software that T. Carroll will train our staff to use.
- 4) Solarized – we already participated in Solarized Tompkins so we just needed to send a list of Dryden residents that had already put solar panels on their property through Solarized Tompkins, which CCE helped us produce.

The \$5,000 we qualified for is earmarked for high impact actions, of which there are other actions that our Town might take using that grant. One possible place for funding is installing a charging station for electric vehicles in a central location, like the parking lot on George Street in the Village. There is currently a rebate opportunity for doing the electric vehicle charging station, which combined with the grant would result in little to no charge to our taxpayers. The other option would be to possibly use the grant to pursue Climate Smart Community status, and potentially associated grant money.

T. Carroll- the Clean Energy Communities Program, that Dryden just became a designated community within that program, there are 10 high-impact action items. You have completed 4 of the 10 and that's how you became designated. They range from something as simple as passing a resolution to doing the Climate Smart Communities Program. The Clean Energy Communities Program is through NYSERDA and the Climate Smart Communities Program is through the Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

- Clean Energy was looking specifically at climate mitigation and how we can get municipalities to be more energy efficient.
- Climate Smart Communities is really looking at climate mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency. Instead of having just 10 actions, there are 83. Instead of completing a certain number of actions, you are really looking to get to a certain point total. Out of those 83 actions, they correspond to about 747 points. The more points the better chances to qualify for grants. There are different levels you can reach: bronze, silver, and a forthcoming gold level that hasn't been released yet. There are 18-19 communities that have reached the bronze level.

Some of the actions I help communities with are things like a natural resource inventory, watershed assessment, greenhouse gas inventory, including sustainability elements in your comprehensive plan, choosing a Climate Smart Communities coordinator, nominating a task force, etc. I am a resource to help communities with these programs.

More information can be found on the website: climatesmart.ny.gov.

There are actions that apply to the municipality and actions that look at the community overall. The hope is that the municipality is demonstrating leadership, showing it is possible to move on these things. They are trying to include not just the municipality, but also members of the community to interact with this. One of the required actions is that there must be a Climate Smart Communities Task Force that is specific to the Town.

Key steps:

- Appoint coordinator, whether it's someone on staff or a community member;
- Look at the program, bringing in planning, folks that have been in town government for a while and know what has been done already;
- Cataloging what has already been done, what is the documentation that is going to be necessary to collect from that; and,
- Look at the program and decide what do we want to do, which of these parts fit with what we are trying to accomplish?

CCE can help guide us, once the Town decides what direction they want to go in.

A. Green wants to know if the Conservation Board might be interested in being the lead agency for this or a task force that has residents and staff involved?

T. Carroll stated the thing he has found when working with other communities is if you can get planning, highway, town clerk, and folks from different committees in a room, it is easier to obtain the information needed for CCE to decide what they can do to help. A. Green is willing to convene an initial meeting geared towards identifying what we already have in place, and report back to the Conservation Board. A. Green stated if P. Davies and J. Wilson are willing to help she would work with them.

Freese Road Bridge

C. Schutt inquired of A. Green regarding status of Town already having decided regarding the design they will be using. A. Green advised the Town did move forward with a two-lane without reference to the historical trusses. There will now be a review by the State Office of Historical Preservation and there are engineering studies that still need to happen.

Discussion ensued regarding concerns:

- About the backfill along the riparian boundary and that in highwater situations we are putting the area at risk.
- Town could indicate to the engineers that they want more than the State minimum standard for a 100-year flood. Perhaps a 500-year flood.
- The need for an independent hydrology group to do a study to go into the SEQR.
- SEQR has not been started, as we are waiting to hear from the State Office of Historical Preservation, DEC, and DOT before the final proposal will come in.
- The reduction of hydraulic capacity.
- Data indicates more frequent floods, as climate change suggests we will be getting more water.

N. Munkenbeck and G. Dodici will work on a resolution advising the Town Board of the Conservation Board's concerns to be ready for the Conservation Board to vote on at their January 2019 meeting. A rough draft will be forwarded to the members prior to the January meeting.

Merging Agricultural Advisory Committee and Conservation Board Reports

Discussion took place regarding merging the AAC and CB recent reports into a bulleted point document that may serve to guide the next Town of Dryden Comprehensive Plan. C. Schutt volunteered to take the responses and pull them all together into one document for review at the January 2019 meeting.

Trinitas Full Environmental Assessment Form

Board reviewed the above-referenced document and had concerns with:

- Page 7, item D-2(j) – traffic levels should be a YES
- Page 11, item E-2(a) Do not believe bedrock depth is correct
- Page 8, item D-2(n)(i) Proposed LED lighting color? Yellow bands of color are best.
- Page 8, item D-2(n)(ii) Do not believe *minimal* tree removal as there are many trees on the property.
- Page 4, item D-1(h)(ii) only mentions runoff from the site, not the current stream
- Page 5, item D-2 (b)(iii) installed where?
- Page 11, item E-2 (d) Do not believe depth is correct.
- Page 11, item E-2 (h)(i) Should be Yes, as there are wetlands
- Page 11, item E-2 (h)(iv) Indicates no streams (misabeled as wetland)
- Page 12, item E-2 (o) – should have a reference provided to show NYSDEC's results
- Page 6, item D-2 (e)(i) – Total of impervious surface is too high. Max should be 6.5 acres, per Town Zoning.

Traffic is going to be an issue.

B. Beck feels they should do an impact statement.

B. Beck is to summarize these findings and will email it back to the Conservation Board for review prior to presenting to the Town Board.

G. Dodici- Following up on our climate resilience and water management- they need to address their storm water management plan and how it incorporates the stream. D. Weinstein advised TG Miller is currently reviewing the storm water management plan.

D. Weinstein- On page 5 they indicated 47,250 gallons/day used and generated. The value they used per person that was set for a school boarding house. The number in the State table for apartments is almost 40% higher than this. TG Miller agreed with this value, they should document exactly why this is a valid number to use. He will send his information around to the Conservation Board for their review.

Decision was made to have a meeting on December 18, 2018, with the main purpose being the reappointment of members and/ or meeting new applicants.

C. Schutt made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by B. Beck and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chrystle Terwilliger
Deputy Town Clerk

D. Weinstein
P. B. update

Biological Resources

Promote policies in keeping with the following concepts:

- Broad landscape connectivity facilitates safe movement between habitat areas for plants and animals.
- Habitat patches in large, broad, contiguous configurations are preferable to small, narrow, or isolated patches.
- Roads, driveways, walls and fences create barriers and hazards to wildlife movement.
 - Broad zones of undisturbed soils and vegetation around sensitive natural areas help to buffer those areas from effects of human activities (pollution, noise, lights, or soil erosion)

Recommendations: The biggies

- Maintain landscape connectivity in large, undisturbed contiguous configurations.
- Protect significant landforms and representatives of all ecologically significant habitats.
- Maintain buffer zones around ecologically sensitive areas.
- Encourage sustainable forestry practices and sustainable and wildlife-friendly agricultural practices.
- Work with conservation laws and guidelines to maintain sustainable woodland diversity.
- Allow regulated harvesting of wildlife and timber resources to maintain a sustainable ecosystem.
- Consider environmental concerns in the planning process for new development projects.
- Direct human uses toward the least sensitive areas, minimize alteration of natural features and concentrate new development along existing roads.
- Encourage the planting of native species.
- Heighten local awareness of the importance of conservation.

The full list:

- Protect areas representing all significant landforms, including the array of elevations and surficial geology, that are representative of the enduring features of the Town.
- Protect habitat areas in large, broad configurations, with broad connections to other habitat areas, to allow animals and plants to move freely and safely between habitat areas.
- Protecting high-quality representatives of all ecologically significant habitats.
- Protecting habitat complexes critical to known species of conservation concern (see lists at end of this report).
- Avoiding fragmentation of large forests and large meadows by roads, driveways, clearings, and structures.
- Direct human uses toward the least sensitive areas, and minimize alteration of natural features, including vegetation, soils, bedrock, and waterways. Maintain broad buffer zones of undisturbed vegetation and soils around ecologically sensitive areas.
- Encourage sustainable forestry practices in working forests, and sustainable agricultural practices that build living soils and conserve water.
- Work with landowners to increase access for responsible hunters in order to maintain deer herds compatible with sustainable woodland diversity.
- Encourage sustainable agricultural practices that build soil, conserve water, and protect water quality.
- Where possible promote wildlife-friendly agricultural practices, such as late mowing to accommodate ground-nesting grassland birds, leaving un-mowed strips and fallow rotations to support pollinators and other beneficial invertebrates, and minimizing applications of pesticides and fertilizers.
- Concentrate new development along existing roads; discourage construction of new roads in undeveloped areas.
- Maintain natural disturbances, such as floods, patterns of stream water flow, ice scour, and wind exposure, all of which help to create and maintain habitat for a wide variety of species.

- Consider environmental concerns early in the planning process for new development projects, and incorporate conservation principles into the choice of development sites, the site design, the stormwater management, and the construction practices.
- Encourage the planting of native plant species in order to maintain wildlife diversity.
- Inform Town agencies, landowners, and the general public about the Cornell Botanic Garden Natural Areas, Finger Lakes Land Trust Preserves, Tompkins County Unique Natural Areas, DEC Significant Biodiversity Areas, and the NY Natural Heritage Program Important Areas, to heighten awareness of their conservation importance.
- Create a map of ecologically significant habitats created by a biodiversity assessment team of knowledgeable community volunteers, with assistance from biologists, naturalists and currently existing available resources.
- Create a report accompanying this map should describe the habitats and their ecological values, and provide site- specific recommendations for conservation.

Report to the CB on the Ag Committee meeting 11 – 14 – 2018

Prepared by Craig Schutt liaison from the CB to the Ag Committee

1. CCE (Cornell Cooperative Extension) had forwarded a document to the Deputy Clerk of farms and farmers in the town. A document that CCE maintains. The purpose of the document was to have the AC review it and make recommendations on what farms to place on the town website listing products for sale. When the AC began to review the list it became clear early on that the list was incomplete and not up-to-date. In consideration of the many problems with the document the AC spent the entire meeting reviewing the entire document, line by line, and making corrections (deletions, additions). No recommendations were made on the original request made by CCE. Members of the AC expressed frustration because many of these needed corrections had been brought to CCE during the process of developing the Ag Protection Plan.