

**Dryden Conservation Board
March 26, 2019**

Members Present: Peter Davies (chair), Bob Beck, Gian Dodici, Craig Schutt, Tim Woods, David Wilson, Jeanne Grace, Milo Richmond (alternate), Nancy Munkenbeck (at 7:36)

Absent: Anne Clark

Liaisons: Craig Anderson, Planning Board; Dan Lamb, Town Board

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

Craig Anderson was welcomed as the new liaison from the Planning Board.

Review and approval of minutes dated February 26, 2019

C. Schutt made a motion to approve the minutes as written, T. Woods seconded the motion, minutes were unanimously approved.

Reports and updates

Agricultural Advisory Committee – Craig Schutt

Was not at last meeting. Did email each CB member a copy of the draft minutes from the March 13, 2019 Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting.

Environmental Management Council (EMC) – Steve Bissen

See attached report

Planning Board – Craig Anderson

As C. Anderson is our new liaison, P. Davies explained the CB would ask that a brief, written update be emailed to the CB members prior to each meeting so the CB can read and review ahead of time.

Dryden Rail Trail – Bob Beck

There is a very quick turnaround for a County grant, which was a municipality's only grant opportunity for Tompkins County municipalities. We received approval for the \$5,000 grant. We are still waiting on the large one, still no word from NYS DOT. We did apply for another grant for \$60,000-\$65,000 from the County Tourism Program, which we should hear in a couple of months.

It was decided that the \$5,000 grant would be used for two more sets of solar-powered crossing signs - one at George Road and one at Mount Pleasant Road.

OLD BUSINESS

Conservation Easement Monitoring Protocol – Jeanne Grace

J. Grace had emailed a draft Conservation Easement Handbook and Annual Monitoring Inspection Report to each of the board members for review and comment.

A lengthy discussion ensued, some highlights:

- Purpose of the easements
- Information that was taken off the Finger Lakes Land Trust's document via Ray Burger (Director of Planning)

- Unique Natural Areas, Conservation Sub-Divisions, Agricultural land
- Buffers
- Open space to replace land being developed
- Need to make a data sheet to gather necessary information during initial site visit
- Planning Department maintains all the paperwork
- GIS data can be obtained through the Planning Department

Members will review and send their ideas to J. Grace by next week and she will put everything together to come up with a possible final version by the next meeting.

Natural Resources Inventory (first draft) produced by Osamu Tsuda of Cornell Cooperative Extension P. Davies – this is one of the major items that the Town can submit to the State to be declared a Climate Smart Community. If we reach this designation, we can apply for certain grants related to conservation and climate. Two employees of CCE undertook producing this document for us, based on prior Natural Resources Inventories they had produced for other municipalities.

D. Weinstein – Has a list of problems with the draft NRI. However, on March 8th O. Tsuda had requested feedback by March 12th and we are well past that. P. Davies advised D. Weinstein to go ahead and send the list to O. Tsuda now, as expecting a reply in 4 days is unrealistic. D. Weinstein listed his concerns (flood maps, prime farm land- if drained, preserves and conservation easements, etc.) and a discussion ensued. The Natural Heritage map only shows the ecological communities but the text talks about rare plants and animals, rare sloping fins and nothing is shown on the map even though we know we have tons of those spread around our community. We have very important resources of rare and endangered plants. B. Beck – The Natural Heritage Program does not like to make public the locations of the rare and endangered species. The map should be deleted. M. Richmond suggested D. Weinstein speak to Todd Bitner regarding the Cornell natural areas. It was agreed that preserves where we encourage people to visit should be listed.

C. Schutt had sent to O. Tsuda a couple of things that he felt were missing

- Virgil Creek Aquafer
- Didn't find any reference to our open space inventory

Guidance Document – C. Schutt/C. Anderson

At the last Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting they came up with some suggestions of things that could be in a guidance document:

- buffers and placement of residential wells
- buffer between farmland and new developments
- cannot spread manure within 100' of a well, so to be safe they are losing some production on some of their ag land.

C. Schutt – We should be trying to do a guidance document for developers that they can look at and see what we do or don't want in Dryden.

C. Anderson- There really isn't any guidance when it comes to natural resource from the zoning point of view. We could take the two plans (Natural Resource Plan and the Agricultural Land Protection Plan), and weave them together into a guidance document with some definitions to help guide a developer.

- The commercial and residential guidelines could be used as references.

- We would come up with a rough draft and get the Planning Department and the Ag Committee to interact with us to fine tune it.
- Come up with a guidance document to run by the Town Board for their input.
- C. Anderson will come up with a list of definitions needed for this board to use for the draft.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Community Science Institute presentation: Water and Community

C. Schutt attended the above-referenced presentation that was held in Aurora, NY on March 23rd. It was a good, diverse group of speakers. Points of interest:

- Stephen Penningroth from the Community Science Institute- Fall Creek has been monitored the longest through his program, almost 15 years. His data shows that at the mouth of Fall Creek it has stayed almost even over the 15 years. Given this information, Fall Creek is not responsible for the algal blooms.
- Data showed a creek up on the North end has more spikes in it, but they have only been monitoring that one for the last 3 years. There is algal bloom right where that creek comes in to Cayuga Lake.
- Another speaker talked about the algal blooms and he explained what they really are and that they can adapt.
- The only explanation as to why we have more algal blooms now, that one of the speakers came up with, is that as the climate is changing maybe the water is staying warmer in the fall and warming up earlier in the year and the algal blooms are not being killed off.
- This issue is across all of the Finger Lakes.
- They do not believe the issue is from one source.
- Air temperature change in the northeast of approximately a 2° increase over the last 40 years.
- Discussed phosphorous and soils.
- More of the large farms are going to drag hoses which binds the manure into the soil better, which lessens the manure being washed away.

Mill Creek Preserve

C. Anderson – The Mill Creek Preserve is a 900-acre sub-division between Wood Road and Caswell Road and goes all the way to Fall Creek. This is coming up for a preliminary sketch plan. It is going to be 38 lots ranging from 5-80 acres each. State law will let you ask a developer for some recreation facilities, so the idea is that the town ask for some land along Fall Creek to be set aside to preserve it. Maybe take in all the wetlands. He believes R. Burger has talked to the developer and they are amenable to something like this. The developer will be here Thursday night so this could be brought up at that time. Maps were reviewed and a discussion took place. They want to sell the lots with restrictive covenants that prevent sub-division.

All agreed that it would be worth asking for the land along Fall Creek to be given to the Town. They would also like to get permission to access the property on a Saturday so they can walk around it and see what is there. C. Anderson will ask if this is possible.

Topics to be discussed at the April meeting:

- Deer Population Management
- Conservation Easement Monitoring Protocol.

There being no further business, N. Munkenbeck made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by B. Beck and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Chrystle Terwilliger
Deputy Town Clerk