

**Dryden Conservation Board
June 25, 2019**

Members Present: Peter Davies (Chair), Bob Beck, Gian Dodici, Craig Schutt, Jeanne Grace, Milo Richmond (Alternate), Anne Clark (at 7:22), and Nancy Munkenbeck (at 7:53)

Absent: David Wilson and Tim Woods

Liaisons: Craig Anderson, Planning Board

The meeting was called to order at 7: 05 p.m.

Review and approval of minutes dated May 28, 2019

Minutes were reviewed, and two minor changes were made:

- 1) Resolution #5 corrected to read six conservation easement documents in lieu of four.
- 2) Under Deer Population Management, bullet 2 was corrected to read:
Deer hunting should be done by local people that are familiar with the area.

Discussion ensued regarding Conservation Easement Handbook – minor changes from R. Burger. The Handbook attached to the May minutes include R. Burger’s changes, but nothing from the attorney. J. Grace will follow-up with R. Burger for attorney response.

C. Schutt made a motion to accept the minutes with the two changes, seconded by B. Beck, unanimously approved.

M. Richmond was appointed as voting member in the absence of D. Wilson and T. Woods.

Reports and Updates

Agricultural Advisory Committee – Craig Schutt

See attached email with the minutes from their June 12, 2019 meeting.

Environmental Management Council (EMC) – Steve Bissen

See attached email with report on their June 13, 2019 meeting.

Dryden Rail Trail – Bob Beck

Attended a meeting of the Tompkins County Parks and Trails Network Group this morning and the Dryden Rail Trail was mentioned numerous times for the great job that has been done.

C. Schutt – inquired about the statement A. Green made regarding the properties we don’t have easements on yet and having to look at other alternatives.

B. Beck – We are going to continue talking with our neighbors and those who own the trail. One owner has closed his business and is in the process of trying to sell the property, so he is reluctant to give an easement for the trail. The bridge is a more expensive construction project if you need to have the approach narrower. If we could get that easement and have the full 66’, because we already have the easement on the western side, it would be a less expensive build. Currently one of the town attorneys is in contact with the owner’s attorney trying to work this out. The reality is that this portion is already encumbered by a town water/sewer easement so there can be no development on the rail bed.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- Purchasing the rail bed property to complete the trail vs. building a smaller bridge at a higher cost
- Town doing eminent domain for just an easement, which is not something the town would want to have to do
- So far there has been no cost to the town for the easements, it has all been donations

Climate Smart Community Task Force – P Davies

The person that put the Climate Smart Community Report together is a professional from Cooperative Extension, who did all the work at no charge to the town. If we can get 120 points, we can send this paperwork to DEC by July 5th to get the designation of Climate Smart Community Bronze level. We could use the bronze designation in other grant applications. As of last Friday, we nominally had 130 points towards this designation. See attached information provided to this Board by A. Green. The Resiliency Plan is not a finished document; and will continue to be worked on. The Conservation Board has been asked to look at the CSC Draft Resiliency Plan (a/k/a Improvement Plan).

Conservation Easement Monitoring Protocol -J. Grace

Several members of this board went to two different properties that have a conservation easement to “test” the documents that were produced for use in easement monitoring. Results:

- Property was not clearly marked, which made it difficult.
- First property has 6 lots, of which the 6th lot is owned by the other 5 lots and each owner is responsible for maintenance. Lot 6 is the conservation easement property and the retention pond is an issue. Spillway went downhill then uphill which, of course, caused the water to run off everywhere. Lot 7 is a gravel driveway that allows everyone in the subdivision access to Lot 6.
- Monitoring people will need to write up their recommendations and provide to R. Burger in the Planning Department for the Planning Department to review and take action.
- They learned a lot and J. Grace will make a clean copy of their forms and share with other members of this board.
- Monitoring forms worked very well.

Decided they really need to have the subdivision map, county property viewer available, and clearly marked survey post in each corner prior to doing their inspection.

Deer Population Management – P. Davies

In the absence of T. Woods, this topic is tabled until the July meeting.

Invasive Species Discussion – P. Davies

Wild parsnip is everywhere this year, mainly where road crews have been mowing along the roadway while the plant is seeding. A. Clark stated theirs came in after the highway department had done their deep cuts.

Another plant that is a problem is the knotweed, it smothers everything. Very hard to get rid of. If the highway digs it and then moves on to another location, just a tiny piece can regenerate it.

P. Davies states that the road crew needs to be alerted to these roadside invasive plant problems.

Discussion ensued regarding these invasive plants, ways to combat them, best time to mow them to prevent regrowth and spreading. The members of the Conservation Board will take a map of the roads in Dryden and indicate on the map where knotweed is throughout the town, when they spot it while driving in the town. J. Grace will contact the highway department to find out how many road miles the town mows, what their mowing schedule is and how many mowers they use.

P. Davies also mentioned another invasive, the Japanese jumping worms. According to the forest ecologist that he has been in contact with, are destroying the organic layer where they come. These worms are very wiggly, and fishermen take them to use for fishing, dump them somewhere else, which results in them getting spread around to new areas. You are supposed to inform the DEC if you find these worms in any area.

G. Dodici stated he has an invasive tree (*Castor aralia*, *Kalopanax septemlobus*) that can grow to be 30 meters, in his NYSEG right-of-way. Once it becomes established it becomes invasive. It has huge thorns and big palmate leaves. Once it has flowered he will kill it.

There will be no August meeting.

There being no further business, G. Dodici made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by A. Clark and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chrystle Terwilliger
Deputy Town Clerk