

# Broome County Environmental Management Council

Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive



Broome County Office Building • 44 Hawley Street • P.O. Box 1766 • Binghamton, New York 13902  
(607) 778-2116 • Fax (607) 778-6051 • Website: [www.gobroomecounty.com](http://www.gobroomecounty.com)

## Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC) Natural Resources Committee Notes from the meeting held Thursday, February 17, 2011 Broome County Office Building, Hawley Street, Binghamton, NY

**Present:** Erin Heard, Karen Ciatyk, Bill Heaviside, Cindy Westerman, Beth Egitto, Julian Shepherd, Vicki Darling, Jason Levy

1. The meeting was **convened** at **4:05 pm**.

### 2. Open Space Plan

- Julian Shepherd, professor at the Binghamton University Department of Biological Sciences, introduced Vicki Darling, a Masters student that he is working with. They are interested in assessing whether her Masters work can contribute to the Open Space Planning efforts. While Vicki is very interested in the topic, they still need to assess whether the goals of the EMC in developing the Open Space Plan fit in with Vicki's plan to develop a project suitable for her program.
- In an email prior to the meeting, Beth had distributed links to several open space plans, natural resource inventories and other planning resources. She recommended that members review them prior to the meeting as a refresher as the project moves forward.
- Beth circulated copies of the most current versions of each section of the plan completed to date.
- The group discussed the goal of the plan. Beth recommended that rather than focusing on having an Open Space Plan with recommendations, it may be more productive to complete and package the inventory portion of the plan so that it can be used as a planning tool by the County, local municipalities and the public at large, without having to go through an official approval process. The group sees that as a valuable aspect to completing the plan. However, members feel that there needs to be a second component that serves as a guide to implementing policies that protect the open space areas. Bill mentioned that the group had previously discussed adding a strategies and tools section, similar to what is included in Fenton's Open Space Plan. This would enhance the inventory by providing mechanisms for incorporating the information into local land use planning. Beth also suggested the development of a ranking tool or methodology as part of the document. This would help individuals or municipalities to assess and prioritize natural resources on their own, to suit their own needs and goals. While everyone feels that these would be valuable portions of the project, there are time constraints that may prevent it from being completed in a timely manner. Perhaps it would be best to focus on the information that is already compiled and address the second portion separately at a later date. The group agreed that it would be a good idea to complete the inventory portion of the plan as a first step, including maps. At that time, the timeline can be assessed and the group can further discuss the development of the second portion to serve as a technical guide to using the inventory information.
- The group discussed the format of the individual sections of the inventory. Since sections were written by different individuals, there is little consistency in the format of the sections. Since most sections are nearly complete or complete, the group agreed that the next step would be to assess all of the sections and decide a format for what should be included in each one. Then, we can use the information that has been gathered already, update it, and fit it into the format that has been decided upon.
- Next steps:
  - Assess formatting of individual sections of inventory.
  - Begin updating sections to include any new information or plans that have become available.
  - Assess which maps will be included.

3. The meeting adjourned at **5:05 pm**. **Next meeting:** Thurs., March 24 @ 4:00pm, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Broome County Office Building, Binghamton.

