



Broome County Environmental Management Council

Debra A. Preston, County Executive

Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC)
Notes from meeting held on Wednesday, June 13th, 2012 at 4:30pm
Exhibit Room, Broome County Library
185 Court Street, Binghamton, NY

Present:

MAL: Bill Heaviside, Karen Ciatyk, Dylan Horvath, Chris Burger, Julia Hoover, Marley Urdanick, and Shelbi DuBord

CAC Reps: Andre LaClair (Fenton)

Staff: Beth Egitto

Others: Tom Evans, STERPDB

1. The meeting was **convened at 4:30 pm.**
2. **Special Presentation: City of Binghamton Energy and Climate Action Plan, Amelia LoDolce, Sustainability Planner, City of Binghamton**

Amelia LoDolce from the City of Binghamton discussed the City's Energy and Climate Action Plan, what process they went through to create the plan and the recommendations that have come out of the plan, along with the next steps for implementation. Amelia began working as the Sustainability Planner to implement programs and policies surrounding the Mayor's goals for climate protection. She touted several benefits of this including reducing costs, bolstering the local economy, improving quality of life, preserving the environment and natural resources, and encouraging fuel independence. The City became a member of ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) and made a commitment to reducing the City's greenhouse gas contributions. As part of this program they committed to the development of an Energy and Climate Action Plan. The plan is a description of the actions (policies, programs, and projects) a government will take to reduce a community's dependence on fossil fuels and to meet its greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction target, which was set at a 25% reduction by 2025. Created by City staff, interns, and a citizen Climate Action Plan Advisory Committee, the City of Binghamton's Energy & Climate Action Plan outlines strategies under seven key categories, for cutting energy costs, promoting energy independence and reducing greenhouse gas emissions within Binghamton. Amelia went through the various sections of the plan highlighting some of the major recommendations and actions. The full plan can be found at: [http://www.cityofbinghamton.com/departments.asp?zone=dept-planning&pid=147&pm=page#Energy and Climate Action Plan](http://www.cityofbinghamton.com/departments.asp?zone=dept-planning&pid=147&pm=page#Energy%20and%20Climate%20Action%20Plan) Further discussion followed.

3. **Announcements /Privilege of the floor/ Items of Interest**

- Minutes were reviewed. Two changes were requested for clarification. Bill made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, Andre seconded the motion; all in favor, motion passed.
- Tom Evans from Southern Tier East Regional Planning and Development Board was present. He updated the group about the progress of the Regional Sustainability Plan for the Southern Tier Economic Development Council Region. The consortium of local representatives that is participating in plan development met recently to review the draft regional sustainability goals that will drive plan development. These goals were developed with information gathered during the public outreach process throughout the previous month. Beth circulated the draft goals. Tom mentioned that members

should feel free to offer input on the goals as they see fit. Information can be found throughout the planning process on the website www.cleanergreenersoutherntier.org.

- Beth mentioned that she has been participating in a steering committee for the development of the Greenway Sign Plan and Design Guide, a project being lead by BMTS. The project seeks to create a branding and marketing strategy for the Greenway network, including existing and planned river and rail trails, and prime locations for various types of signs and kiosks. Beth circulated some information about questions that the steering committee are currently addressing in the early stages of the project.
- Beth circulated a notice that she received regarding a new pipeline that is planned from Pennsylvania into New York State, which will travel through the Eastern Portion of Broome County. There will be a public information session about this project at the West Windsor Fire Hall, Wednesday, July 18, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
- Andre brought up an issue of concern regarding renewable energy technology on residential properties. Andre indicated that he recently found out that while homeowners may receive a break on their tax assessment up to 15 years, there are a couple of issues with the renewable tax exemption laws that may discourage homeowners from investing in these technologies. The law gives municipalities the opportunity to opt out of the exemption if they so choose. Also, having the technology may increase the assessment of your property which in effect will increase your taxes. This may discourage homeowners because the savings achieved through using these technologies may be canceled out by the increased cost of taxes. The group had a brief discussion and decided that it should be further discussed at the Natural Resources Committee with more information.

4. Committee and CAC Updates

- Natural Resources Committee – There was no committee meeting scheduled for May
- Vestal CAC- Cindy could not attend.
- Fenton CAC – The CAC received comments from the County for their 239 review. The public hearing is scheduled for June 27th. The group has been working on the identification of parcels for potentially adding to the Unique Natural Areas Inventory.

5. Membership and Administrative Items

- Beth mentioned that Mark Bowers from NYSDOT had offered to give a presentation to the group about “Smart Transportation”, using smart growth and sustainability in transportation projects and planning. Beth said that she would arrange the presentation but would poll members prior to sending out a notice due to July being a busy month for many people.
- Beth reminded everyone that she would not be here for the meetings in September and members would need to run this meeting without staff assistance. There were no volunteers at this time to assist with this task.

6. The meeting was **adjourned at 6:30 pm**. The next meeting will be held on **July 11th, 2012 @ 4:30pm**.