



Broome County Environmental Management Council

Debra A. Preston, County Executive

**Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC)
Notes from meeting held on Wednesday, July 11th, 2012 at 4:30pm
Exhibit Room, Broome County Library
185 Court Street, Binghamton, NY**

Present:

MAL: Erin Heard, Bill Heaviside, Karen Ciatyk, Chris Burger, Marley Urdanick

CAC Reps: Andre LaClair (Fenton) and Cindy Westerman (Vestal)

Staff: Beth Egitto

Others: Julia Hoover, Mark Bowers, Zack McKenna, Deb Overfield and Paul Jakowski

1. The meeting was convened at 4:30 pm.

2. Special Presentation: Smart Transportation - Mark Bowers, New York State Department of Transportation

Mark Bowers, Capital Program Analyst and Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Coordinator spoke about the role of the New York State Department of Transportation and Sustainability. Recently enacted State legislation, coupled with the Departments commitment to Context Sensitive Solutions and new corporate goals that focus on Sustainability have NYSDOT positioned to be a leader in supporting a sustainable society. He also discussed Smart Growth as well as, The Natural Step, and the agencies role with respect to land use and transportation.

Smart Transportation is also used interchangeably with Sustainable Transportation. It is using context sensitive solutions in transportation planning and projects. There is billions of dollars in transportation spending each year, providing opportunities for incorporating smart transportation principles. These include addressing the “triple bottom line” for a sustainable economy; social, environment and economy and the “Natural Step System” consisting of interrelated conditions where context informs good planning. DOT now incorporates these ideas through the NYS Smart Growth Infrastructure Policy which requires that state funded projects meet certain sustainability criteria and the Greenlights Program which is a system for ranking transportation projects, similar to the LEED certification system for buildings. This program measures sustainable performance, recognizes and promotes green practices, and provides a screening tool early in project development.

Mark also gave a brief overview of the Smart Code, which is a transect based code that recognizes that there is a transect from the urban city centers to the rural areas which creates a different context in each zone. According to the idea of the Smart Code, zoning codes and planning policies should be based on the context of where they are places and the form of the building should be the primary consideration, rather than the use, as in traditional zoning. This enhances livability through improved access and less traffic, has shared benefits of lower cost/lower taxes, keeping open space green, and enhancing public health by combating obesity and air quality issues.

Mark continued to talk about some of the other benefits to incorporating sustainability principles into transportation projects and community planning in general. Additional discussion followed.

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

- Minutes were reviewed. Andre made a motion to approve the minutes, Bill seconded the motion; all in favor, motion passed.
- Beth mentioned that she has been participating in the steering committee for the Greenway Sign Plan and Design Guide. She circulated a link to a survey for input about the greenway name, sign design and logo design.
- Beth circulated a flyer for the annual Binghamton Bridge Pedal being held Saturday July 14th at 9am by BMTS. This is a bike tour around the downtown Binghamton and river corridor areas.
- Beth circulated a notice from Cornell Cooperative Extension that they are looking for volunteers for a forest pest project on July 12th and 13th. The program will train volunteers to identify and document the invasive Asian Longhorned Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. Volunteers will then be able to recognize the signs of their presence in the wild in order to help identify if they have spread to the local area. Interested individuals can contact CCE at 607-584-5013.
- Bill circulated an article about the Department of Agriculture managing NYC Canada Geese through collection and gassing. Geese were donated to homeless shelters and soup kitchens. Some members noted seeing less geese at parks this year.
- Julia mentioned that there is a project going on at the National Pipe and Plastics Site in Endicott. She noted that public hearing was going on this evening and members should attend if possible. She has concerns over the proposed use of the site in a residential area.
- Andre circulated an article about the Removal of Hazardous Substances regulations that lead to the removal of lead and other substances from products. The article talked about the problems created by the implementation of the regulations. Andre will email the article for anyone interested.

4. Committee and CAC Updates

- Natural Resources Committee – NRC met on June 27th. Tom Evans from STERPDB was present to discuss ways that EMC projects can be integrated into their work on water quality initiatives. The group also discussed the issues of the municipal option to opt out of tax exemptions for renewable energy home improvements and agreed that more information is needed to take any action. The group also discussed the current status of the open space plan.
- Vestal CAC – Cindy reported that the CAC’s document regarding hydrofracking impacts in Vestal is near complete. Several members would like to see it. Cindy said she will keep the group posted.
- Fenton CAC –The long environmental assessment form for the Fenton Open Space Plan was completed and sent to the NYSDEC with a negative declaration that was approved by the town. They held a public hearing for the document in June.

5. Membership and Administrative Items

- The speaker for September will be Diane Cohen of Finger Lakes ReUse.
- Beth reminded everyone that she would not be here in September and members would need to run this meeting without staff assistance. Cindy volunteered to take minutes and Chris volunteered to assist the speaker in set up.
- Chris offered to give his talk on zero waste at one of the upcoming meetings. [Editor’s note: This talk will be given in November. The October meeting will feature Beth Egitto and Frank Evangelisti from Broome County Planning regarding the County Comprehensive Plan]

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