



Broome County Environmental Management Council

Debra A. Preston, County Executive

Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC)
Notes from the meeting held Wednesday, January 11, 2012
Broome County Public Library, 185 Court Street Binghamton, NY 13901

Present:

Members-at-Large: Bill Heaviside, Tony Lubzanski, Zack Smith and Erin Heard

CAC Reps: Andre LaClair, Fenton and Cindy Westerman, Vestal

Staff: Beth Egitto, BC Planning

Associate Members: Julia Hoover

Other: Dylan Horvath and Ilga Stein

1. The meeting was **convened at 4:30 pm**. Bill noted a few grammatical corrections in the minutes. Bill made motion to approve the minutes as amended, Andre seconded it. All in favor. Motion approved.
2. **Privilege of the Floor/Announcements/Member Items of Interest**
 - Comments in response to the SGEIS on Natural Gas Drilling were sent to the NYSDEC. The deadline was January 11th. The final comments were voted on and approved via an email ballot with all votes in favor. Beth circulated copies of the comments for reference.
 - Beth announced that the Planning Department has organized and will be holding a Flood Mitigation Workshop at the Union Endicott High School Auditorium on Tuesday, January 24th from 6-9pm. The workshop will provide an overview of the September 2011 flood event and a discussion of mitigation strategies for minimizing flooding impacts. Guest speakers include representatives from NYSDEC, NOAA, and Soil and Water. Beth circulated flyers advertising the event.
 - Marley mentioned that she and Adam Flint are interested in giving a presentation on the Green Jobs, Green New York Program being run through Cornell Cooperative Extension. They agreed that they could do this for the March meeting. The group agreed that this would be a good opportunity for a larger public education event. Cindy suggested that perhaps this could be done at a location where there could be food and drink for a social hour in conjunction with the event. Everyone agreed that this would be a good idea, but Beth mentioned that in order to do this it would be more appropriate for the members to make arrangements for the social hour component
3. **Binghamton University Deer Population Issues**
 - Andre brought up the issue of the Binghamton University deer culling issue that has been prevalent in the local news. Andre acknowledged that the EMC has had a longstanding relationship with several of the individuals from the University that have participated in the development of the plan and that they have a history of balanced and thorough review of these types of issues. He wondered if members would be interested in learning more about the plan and perhaps providing an opinion on the topic.
 - Dylan Horvath, Steward of the Nature Preserve was present and gave a brief overview of the issue. He noted that most of the opposition to the option of culling the deer population has seemed to come from out of town. He gave an overview of some of the issues that the large deer population has caused. These include loss of young trees and ground plants, and associated impacts on wildlife populations that depend on this type of vegetation. Dylan went over a couple of the options that they looked at which included moving the deer and sterilization. These were determined to be unfeasible or ineffective. Due to a court decision which determined that they would have to comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), they were unable to do the culling over the winter break between semesters as originally planned. Therefore, it is unlikely that any action will take place prior to next winter at the earliest. He is hesitant to do the culling during the semester due to safety and liability issues.

- Dylan mentioned that he had a presentation prepared that he could give to provide additional information on the topic. The group agreed that he should come to the Natural Resources Committee meeting and give the presentation. He agreed to do this at the meeting on January 25th.

4. Committee and CAC Reports

- Natural Resources Committee – Due to technical issues the group was unable to view the maps that were created by the EMC intern, Magda Masquita Mckeller, however the group was able to view the list of map features that she created in order to create the maps, as well as a couple of the printed maps. Bill mentioned that there had not been an NRC Chair appointed for 2012 yet. Bill expressed that he was willing to take this on if no one else was interested. As Chair-elect, Erin appointed Bill as NRC Chair.
- Vestal CAC – Cindy reported that the group discussed their library materials. They plan to go through the materials to catalogue what is there and to remove any duplicate copies. They also discussed the field trips that they had taken throughout the past year and other items to include in an annual report for 2011.
- Fenton CAC – Andre reported that the group discussed plans to redo their natural resources inventory to match the County Open Space Plan categories. They also are looking to rewrite the natural history portion to include a more detailed discussion of shale layers. They also discussed including the drilling issue as part of land use plans and policies.

5. Membership and Administrative Items

- Membership and Executive Committee Ballot results – Beth announced that all new and returning members that were included on the ballot were approved for recommendation to the County Executive for appointment. The Executive Committee vote was: Erin Heard – Chair, Marley Urdanick and Andre LaClair, Vice-Chairs. The membership and Chair appointment recommendations will be forwarded to the County Executive's office for approval. Beth circulated an updated copy of the roster.
- 2012 Calendar Update – Beth circulated copies of the most recently adopted calendar.
- 2012 Work Plan – Beth circulated a list of items that members expressed an interest in including on the Council's Work Plan. These included special events, the Open Space Plan, Gas Drilling issues, Flood Mitigation, review of by-laws, contributing to local and regional environmental planning efforts, and membership recruitment, among others. The group discussed action items to be associated with each of these topics. Beth requested that members express interest in which items that they were interested in contributing to in order to assign tasks to individuals on the Work Plan. Items that were discussed will be included in the work plan when it is written up.

6. The meeting adjourned at 6:30pm. **Next meeting:** Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at 4:30 pm