

Town of Knox
Conservation Advisory Council
2016 Annual Report

Members: Laure-Jeanne Davignon, Tony Forti, Nathan Giordano (chair),
Pat Irwin, Travis O'Donnell, Pete Shunney, Dee Woessner

The CAC reviewed the Natural Resource Inventory put together by the Berne Conservation Board.

The CAC reviewed and drafted a letter of support for the amendments to the zoning ordinance drafted by the Planning Board regarding noise and lighting regulations.

The CAC recommended the Town of Knox request to the state that an Environmental Impact Study be performed for the Kinder-Morgan Pipeline expansion, in light of changes to the environment, as well as technology, manufacturing, and usage since the original pipeline was installed.

The CAC recommended the Town of Knox request Intervener Status in regards to the Kinder-Morgan Pipeline expansion.

The CAC offered input at the request of the supervisor regarding dead and dying trees in the town park.

The CAC hosted a presentation by Thom Engle on the topic of caves and underground water systems in the Town of Knox and surrounding areas.

Dee reported on the Berne Conservation Board meetings which she attended. There was discussion of joint ventures between Berne and Knox.

Dee, Nathan and Dan Driscoll reported on the 3-hour workshop they attended in Delmar on Woodlands Water and Wetlands, which included presentations from the DEC, Cornell Cooperative Extension and Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy.

The CAC discussed possible options for a local college student who has expressed interest in helping out with town wetlands. Ingrid Haeckel's (DEC) suggestions were reviewed, as were Dan's. It was decided it might be best to start him in a small area in the vicinity of Witter Road, comparing existing wetlands mapping with current satellite and infrared imagery.

Dee reported on the workshop she attended at the Huyck Preserve on the topic of Vernal Pools.

The proposed new business district was discussed in the area of routes 156 and 157. Some considerations that were noted include the underground geology and water systems, the scenic vistas and view-shed of the area, and the aesthetics of the area being a sort of gateway to the town for many commuters. It was discussed that input should be sought from local geologist Charles VerStraeten.

The CAC discussed the presence of dumpsites in town and the potential environmental concerns. It was determined that if the town board desired, the CAC could evaluate and weigh in with specific environmental concerns of illegal sites as identified by the code enforcement officer.

The proposed town park plan was reviewed and discussed with maps and satellite imagery of the area.

Rich Weltzin and Amy Pokorny presented to the CAC on the Benchmark Reporting which is one of four requirements for the town to qualify for a grant from NYSERDA. The purpose is to track municipal energy use and share the information for municipalities across the state to compare. Rich demonstrated the Portfolio Manager software provided by NYSERDA. He has been populating energy usage data and offered to continue doing so for the town. It allows the town to track energy usage by building or campus, I.E. the Town Hall, Highway Garage, Transfer Station, Park.

Betty Ketcham presented an updated flood map of the town that she's been working on for the DEC, and discussed others that she's working on for the comprehensive plan update.

A general discussion was held about the grid and infrastructure requirements. Pat had good insight from her professional background working with transformers and electrical design.

Dee reported on a seminar she attended at UAlbany on the topic of extreme weather, weather prediction and public notification of weather events. She would like to prepare a summary presentation for the CAC and Town Board.

A general discussion was held about the supply and quality of water locally. Pete provided insight from his professional background working as an operator at the water treatment facility at BKW.