

Town of Knox
Conservation Advisory Council
2023 Annual Report

Members: Eric Marczak (Chair), Peter Farquharson, Nelson Kent, Amy Lauterbach, Brigitte McAuliffe, Dave Nelson

Membership

- Peter Farquharson resigned in July and Dave Nelson was appointed to replace him in November.

Education and Outreach

- The CAC presented information to the Knox Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals about a planned open space inventory.
- Nelson met with BKW school staff to explore community service opportunities for students.
- Survey questions related to water quality were drafted to begin establishing baseline data for private wells and shared wells (at the three trailer parks in Knox), and to supplement mapping of karst sink holes, caves and springs.
- Survey questions were drafted to gather data on residents' values and visions for Knox by demographic and location.
- Composed an article for the Town's May newsletter to announce the \$39,704 grant from Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District for a wetland protection project that paid for Albany County highway department personnel to repair an erosion scar on Street Road that drained into the town park wetland. The grant also paid for materials for CAC members and volunteers to build a wheelchair accessible plank walkway from Street Road out to an existing observation boardwalk in the wetland.
- The CAC's May newsletter article also provided links to information about water protection for private wells.
- Articles by the CAC in the May and September issues of the town newsletter featured repair work members and resident volunteers were doing on the old boardwalk in the wetland, and solicited help for the plank walkway.
- Nelson provided drone video photography of the plank walkway, boardwalk and surrounding wetland.
- The CAC hosted a public presentation by experts Tristan Lowery, President of Hudson Mohawk Bird Club about birds that have been documented at the Knox wetland, and Jared Feura of NYSDEC about the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas III.

Map Inventory (OSI)

- Met with Betty Ketcham to inventory and update maps of Knox

Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs)

- Members attended presentations with Christine Vanderlan and Gretchen Stevens of Hudson River Estuary Program about establishing CEAs and other available conservation planning and protection measures.

Wetlands Boardwalk Restoration Project

- Members met with Bob Frederick and Marshall LeFebvre of Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy to review design plans for the plank walkway from Street Road to the existing boardwalk.
- Members and volunteers repaired the wetland kiosk and finished construction of the plank walkway.
- The CAC began plans for developing signage and interpretive materials for the kiosk, walkway and observation area on the old boardwalk.

Other

- Discussed the need to update the town's comprehensive plan of 1994 and how it supports the work of the CAC, the planning board, zoning board of appeals, building and zoning administrator as well as the town board.