

Attending: Eric Marczak, Peter Farquharson, Nelson Kent, Brigitte McAuliffe (by phone), Amy Pokorny

Eric opened the meeting at 7:39 PM.

Housekeeping

- Nelson made a motion to approve the December meeting minutes, Eric seconded and the motion passed.
- Eric suggested we take tutorials on SEQR together or individually and get certificates.

Organizational

- Nelson met with BKW staff on 1/26 regarding a partnership with Kiwanis and HFCO to provide community service opportunities for students.
 - Mark Tidd, BKW's College and Career Readiness Coordinator, works with community organizations to match student interests, requirements for credits with local service opportunities.
 - Nelson suggested the CAC might have opportunities for two junior members who would be expected to attend regular meetings, as well as short term work projects to help with the boardwalk improvement effort.
 - Nelson will be a judge for the BKW Science Fair from 5:30 until 7:30 on Thursday, March 16.

Education and Outreach

- We will review the paper Peter prepared for distribution to the town board, planning board and zoning board of appeals.
- We'll prepare a short presentation for the town board.
- We can ask residents about their water quality and other water source issues.
 - Amy will start a draft of some questions for CAC to brainstorm.
- We will put information out on various outlets to introduce residents to our water quality initiative, build interest
 - Next newsletter will be late April or early May.
 - Amy will ask Traci to post on the town website, Facebook pages.
 - Eric will draft a letter to the editor of the Enterprise that can serve for the website and Facebook posts.
 - We'll hang posters in public places.
 - Hold a public informational meeting:
 - Ask residents for their email addresses to build a contact list for future communications.
 - Amy will draft an email asking for email contacts.
 - Would need to allow people to unsubscribe.
 - Ask Albany County Department of Health to attend?
- Amy will ask the Knox Town Board for email addresses for official business; individually or as a group, such as CAC@knoxny.org

Open Space Inventory (OSI)

- What are the next steps?
 - What field work is needed?
- Apply for grant from HREP.
- Mohawk River Basin just opened a request for applications for funds that will close on 3/3/23.

Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs)

- Peter reviewed information from the 1/23/23 call with Christine Vanderlan about CEAs:
 - CAC can shepherd a CEA through development, but the town board and Albany County Planning Board would be involved in establishing a conservation overlay zone as a change to local zoning.
 - Conservation overlay zones can overlap and cross existing zoning districts.

- Measurable data would be needed for justification.
 - DEC assistance would be available.
- A SEQR question prompts consideration of any CEA in project reviews.
- Anna Palmer is a contact for Drinking Water Source Protections Program.
 - Eric will reach out to Anna.
 - We need to identify water quality problem areas and specific problems before we can create a CEA.
 - Peter will ask Anna about technical assistance.
 - Technical and/or financial assistance may be available for mapping
 - NYS offers free technical assistance for developing a water plan through their main office.
 - Testing and mapping?
 - Peter will look at availability of grant programs to hire engineers, other technical help.
 - DEC prefers their own data to Steve Winkley's data, but he may be more able to examine and map karst and more difficult areas.
 - We'll need to request approval from the town board to apply for grants.
- How to locate springs?
 - Eric will look at US Geological Survey.
 - NYS geological maps were updated about 10 years ago.
 - Peter and Nelson can work with Albany County GIS portal to get maps of water sources.
 - Water mapping (S&WP) is different from OSI mapping (HREP).
 - Albany County? database of sites where well blasting has been done, how much explosives were used, etc.
 - LiDaR (light detection and ranging)
 - Does Knox have water maps?
 - Ask long time residents:
 - Dick Dexter, Jay Francis, Bob Kellie, Brian Whipple, Jim Schager, Justin Landauer?, Lou Saddlemire, Dennis Barber, Nick Viscio, Thom Engel, Emily Davis, Howard Zimmer, Tom Wolfe...
 - Eric will ask Bob Loudon from Schoharie Co.
 - Eric will send CAC an EPA paper about evaluation of karst areas.
 - Possible resources for information:
 - Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District
 - Schoharie County Soil and Water Conservation District
 - NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets Soil and Water Conservation Committee
- Amy will ask Nan Stolzenberg about how Wright established their CEAs.
- Amy will send the Knox law with water protection language to CAC members.

Wetlands Boardwalk Restoration Project

Other Discussion

- Long range planning should consider establishing a municipal water source to accommodate possible risks from drought, contamination of individuals' wells, influx of climate refugees, etc.
 - Refugees are currently moving inland to Massachusetts, Montana, Wyoming, mostly to cities.
- A1 site for inexpensive drinking water is on south side of Route 7 just east of the Route I-88 overpass.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.