

Attending: Eric Marczak, Peter Farquharson, Nelson Kent, Brigitte McAuliffe, Amy Pokorny

Dick Dexter also attended.

Eric opened the meeting at about 7:43.

### Housekeeping

- Peter Farquharson was sworn in by Town Clerk Traci Schanz.
- Nelson moved to approve the July minutes, Eric seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- Eric moved to approve the meeting minutes for August, Nelson seconded and all approved.

### Organizational

- We can make bylaws to clarify our role.
- Peter is referencing the Town of Knox Comprehensive Plan goals, which will inform and guide our goals, recommendations and activities.
  - Prioritize conservation of natural resources.
  - Set policy points for providing information, expertise about resources: agriculture, water, air, forested lands.
  - Eric plans to go to the planning board to let them know we'll serve as a resource.
- Brigitte noted that the CAC's role is to advise the town board, planning board, ZBA and Building and Zoning Administrator about the resources that are important to protect and how to protect them.
  - It is not the CAC's role to contribute labor to projects, although individual members may choose to.

### Education and Outreach

- Eric is working with Noah Zweifel of the Enterprise on an article about plans to improve the wetlands boardwalk.
  - We may send our slide show to him.
- Peter offered to help with school presentations, nature walks.
  - Bird and amphibian counts can involve and inform the public.

### Wetlands Boardwalk Restoration Project

- Amy reported that town board members at their September meeting were receptive to making improvements to the boardwalk.
  - Highway superintendent Matt Schanz is willing to add width to the road just west of the driveway into the wetlands to make a parking area for several cars.
  - Matt also offered to pave a trail like the walking trail in the town park as a less expensive alternative to the three plank wide walkway with bumper rails that we proposed.
  - Concerns raised by the town clerk were wheelchair accessibility and safety on the plank walkway.
    - Our proposal does not conform to ADA standards (hand rails, grade, etc.), but that is not required.
    - Cross members and triangulation would be needed to support hand rails.
- Eric is awaiting a response from DEC Region 4's Kate Kornack about the permitting requirements for proposed work in the wetlands.
  - There are no additional specific regulations for sedge meadows.
  - New York National Heritage Project works with DEC and is a resource for legal interpretations.
- Eric and town board member Dennis Cyr have talked about preservatives and other leachate materials that are minimally harmful to the environment.
  - Organic preservatives are available.
- Eric and Nelson are researching materials and costs for boardwalk access improvements.
  - Cost for a new kiosk is about \$700
  - Cost for 2" x 12" x 12' pressure treated planks is about \$2,000 PT or \$1,000 for rough swan hemlock

- Fastener costs have to be added.
- Mike Hammond may have ideas about suitable materials for boardwalk repairs/replacement members.
- Curtis Lumber may be a source?
- We'll need to estimate longevity and frequency for replacing hemlock planks and PT bases/stringers/supports.

### Project Ideas

- Peter will explain how to get the Open Space Inventory done.
  - Collect input from public in open meetings, by other means
  - How to meet requirements and craft the inventory report
  - We need to identify what species we have.
  - Peter will prepare Open Space Inventory guidelines, and reference information from DEC, Hudson River Estuary Program, Albany County GIS portal and other resources in one place.
- The Open Space Inventory complements the comprehensive plan, depending on citizen priorities.
  - The Inventory provides information to support citizen priorities.
- An updated survey of resident priorities is needed.
  - Outreach via Survey Monkey, Enterprise, link to web page, mailing.
  - Aim for 60% response rate.
  - Do residents like it here, or do they want Knox to change?
  - What is important about the town?
  - Peoples' wells ran dry this summer, what did they experience?
    - Drought conditions put water quality in question.
- We will determine what our CAC functions will be after we know what kind of information is needed.
- We will outline the process for the Inventory for the Altamont Enterprise so the public is informed and can contribute.

### Other Discussion

- Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy has trail work opportunities for volunteers.
- DEC doesn't make it possible to test water and release results for some pollutants.
  - Adirondack testing Lab won't test water if it is apparently polluted.
  - ACHD tests do not address industrial pollutants.
  - Brigitte has the name of a firm who might test for these types of pollutants.
  - Local anecdotes:
    - Accident on Rt. 157A resulted in a spill, absorption material was swept to the side of the road.
    - Solvents were used to clean asphalt off paving equipment at pull off on Rt. 146 near Beebe Road.
  - Two hours is the spill response time.
    - What is a spill? Need to inform the public
    - Protection from toxins is as important an issue as protection from guns, other threats.
  - 1 gallon of gasoline will pollute a million gallons of drinking water.
- Brigitte reported that planning is urgently needed to address a predicted influx of refugees to our area within the next ten years.
  - Causes will include drought and fires in the west, flooding coastal areas in the US and other countries, immigrants seeking asylum at the southern border and from political instability and wars in other countries.

Eric moved for adjournment, Amy seconded and all approved at 9:05 PM.