

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

Eric Marczak was absent.

The meeting opened at 7:47 PM.

Housekeeping

- Brigitte made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes, Nelson seconded and the motion passed.
- Brigitte made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes, Peter seconded and the motion passed.

Organizational

- Brigitte will include meeting minutes and a summary of our activities in 2022 in the annual report .

Education and Outreach

- Helpful information about relevant issues can be released in presentations to the town board, in the Altamont Enterprise, in town newsletter mailings (two each year) and on town Facebook and website postings.
 - In addition to posting links to informational websites on our town web page, we will provide phone numbers for resources for a variety of issues and problems.
 - The Agricultural Advisory Committee has been publicizing their work in this manner.
 - Some of the issues they identify in suggesting ways to avoid and resolve nuisance complaints with neighbors are also of concern to the CAC, including use of agricultural chemicals and their potential for pollution, and groundwater safety.
- Peter will circulate the document about the OSI that he is preparing for comment. After CAC review, it can be presented to the town board and to the public. His updates will include comprehensive plan references to goals and other information.

Open Space Inventory (OSI)

- Open Space Inventory grants should be available now that the Environmental Bond Act passed.
 - DEC funds for programs will likely follow funding for hard infrastructure priorities.
 - An annual primary focus for NYS funding programs will be announced in the spring.
 - Brigitte will research more information on the Consolidated Funding timetable.
 - Our next steps can be to gather relevant materials that already exist and identify tasks that still need to be done.
 - We can begin publicizing our efforts to prepare residents for a survey about what is important to them.

Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs)

- Peter provided DEC information on Critical Environmental Areas and suggested the CAC consider establishing CEAs where karst is vulnerable to possible pollutants. (He noted that some things can fall through the cracks during project planning and reviews.)
 - Other valuable resources in the community can be identified for protection by establishing CEAs.
 - CEAs can be established by municipalities for cultural and historic resources, scenic vistas, and other valuable resources.
 - Community input is needed to identify resources of value.
 - CEAs are a proclamation (not legislation) that publicizes the value of a resource and identifies it for special attention in SEQR.
 - No CEAs have been established yet in Albany County.
 - Some NYC watershed areas have CEAs.
 - The Town of Wright has three CEAs just west of Knox.
 - One CEA in Wright from 1998 identifies a karst area for protection of groundwater.

- Town of Wright resident Nan Stolzenberg is a professional planner who was contracted by Knox for work and advice on the 2014 comprehensive plan update efforts.
 - Amy will reach out to Nan to request more information about that, including why and how it was developed.
- A CEA would need to have a definitive map (not as detailed as a land survey).

Wetlands Boardwalk Restoration Project

Other Discussion

- Albany County Planning Board strongly recommends updating our comprehensive plan. Protecting groundwater is a stated goal in the 1994 (current) comprehensive plan.
 - Albany County Planning Board feedback on two proposals for business development at the intersection of State routes 156 and 157 will be sent to the CAC members. It would be useful to help justify continued work to update our comprehensive plan.
 - The comprehensive plan is becoming more outdated over time.
 - Peter noted outdated information on the scenic resources map and in the inventory of cultural resources. Some geological information on maps has also been updated.
- Peter and Amy reported on the December 5 meeting with Eric and Berne Conservation Advisory Board members Kathy Moore (chair), Nancy Engel, Sue Hawkes-Teeter and Cynthia Johnson.
 - Providing information to the public about composting could be a joint project that would benefit both towns.
 - Brush collection and processing for mulch would also provide a useful service to residents in both towns.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.