

Town of Knox
Conservation Advisory Council
2022 Annual Report

Members: Eric Marczak (Chairman), Amy Pokorny, Nelson Kent, Peter Farquharson, Brigitte McAuliffe
The CAC was reinstated after a multi-year hiatus.

The CAC discussed possibility of submitting previously developed open area inventory and map to Town Board to accept and approve as the Town open space index.

CAC agreed to be an educational resource for Town residents. Provide web information and access. Prepare presentations for each board in the Town. Compose articles for newsletter and paper.

Review other communities CAC information to incorporate best practices/ideas.

CAC discussed potential areas for focus, and/or projects, as well as establish goal to become a CAB.

- Open Space Inventory (OSI – both public & private)
 - Hudson River Estuary Program (HREP), DEC and Cornell fund OSI projects
- Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)
- File Knox Habitat Summary w/DEC
- Look into DEC mapping resources
- Look into Thacher Park resources (examples):
 - Maps
 - Historical
 - Archaeological
 - Geological
- Wetlands boardwalk restoration
 - Met with expert to assess structural integrity (deemed sound)
 - Gathered information on Wetland Trail Design & Construction
 - Wheelchair accessible?
 - Materials options
 - Sedge Meadow designation?
- Town toxins study?
- Survey?
- Climate/Environmental Refuges in the future
 - Protect water
- Increase transparency and build credibility

CAC hosted Thom Engel to discuss:

- Karst geology in the Town.
 - Sinkholes, caves & sinking streams
- Caves (including water sampling)
- Effects of hydrofracking wells
 - Dynamite in well development requires advance notice within one mile
- Underground water flows
 - Karst acts as underground pipes. No filtration.
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CAC discussions and follow up investigations into:

- Grant opportunities to fund CAC activities
- Other help available
- Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs)

CAC met with experts to discuss wetlands, Karst geology and shared concerns:

- Thom Engel – President Northeastern Cave Conservancy (NCC) – discussed karst and caves
- Mark Hohengasser and Marshall LeFebvre - discussed appropriate wetlands construction methods, materials
- Thursday Naturalists - developing a wetlands species list
- Berne Conservation Board collaborative meeting
- Rebecca Higgins - discussed opportunities for funds from the Inflation Reduction Act
- Ingrid Haeckel, Gretchen Stephens and Christine Vanderlan for preliminary Habitat Assessment training
- Representatives from Orange County, NY and Hudson River Estuary Program roundtable - discussion about model activities for CACs and CABs

