

**Town of Bethlehem
Citizens Advisory Committee On Conservation**

December 11, 2006 Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

John Smolinsky, Chairman
Mike DiPaolo
Jeff Freedman
Nancy Heinzen
Libby Liebschutz

John Mead
Ted Putney
Michael Waldenmaier
Matt Watson
Caleb Wistar

Staff Members Present:

George Leveille
Janine Saatman
Deborah Kitchen

Chairman's Report:

The following materials were distributed to CACC members: a meeting announcement for CACC's January 8, 2007 public meeting; a joint meeting announcement for CACC, the Route 9W Corridor Study, and the LWRP; minutes of CACC's November 13th meeting; and an email from Katherine Daniels along with email responses from Supervisor Egan and Town Board member Sam Messina. Chairman Smolinsky next discussed the upcoming January 8th public meeting on the Funding Report. An agenda will need to be prepared. Chairman Smolinsky indicated that he would give the PowerPoint presentation he used for the October 25, 2006 presentation to the Town Board; a copy of this will be emailed to members for their information. There was a suggestion that copies of the executive summary be provided as handouts at the meeting. Libby asked whether the committee wants to have specific questions to pose. It was decided that a subcommittee would meet the week of December 25th to plan details of the meeting. Chairman Smolinsky, Caleb Wistar, Val Newell, and Mike DiPaolo offered to participate in that subcommittee. As far as advertising the January 8th meeting, announcements would be placed on the Town's website, in the *Spotlight* newspaper, and sent to rural landowners and perhaps emailed to groups such as Bethlehem Tomorrow and the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy.

Draft Work Plan:

1) Integrated Slingerlands Trail Network–

Brian McMahon of Edwards and Kelcey (E & K) indicated that he would be filling in for Jaclyn Hakes for the presentation of E & K's work on the Slingerlands Integrated Pedestrian Network. The brief presentation touched on highlights of the December 2006 report. Pedestrian connections reaching into and out of the hamlet as depicted in Figure 5 on page 15 was discussed. The possibility of a parallel service road was mentioned. Cross streets, which may be actual streets or simply pedestrian walkways, were proposed at approximately 300 to 400 foot intervals (blockfaces). Hamlets would incorporate mixed uses and design guidelines were recommended.

The recommendation of linking the old Slingerlands hamlet with the new is depicted in figure 8 on page 19. One possibility is the use of historic lighting along the corridor. A link can also be made to the Pine Hollow Preserve. Regional recommendations are shown in figure 11 on page 22. Other connections, such as along the Normans Kill to the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy preserves and to the future Albany County rail trail, are proposed.

General cost estimates outlined on page 30 were pointed out. Half the cost of a double-sided sidewalk along New Scotland Road within the hamlet (line one) would be covered by the NYS Department of Transportation. It is also assumed that developers would pay some of the cost as projects within the hamlet are developed.

Next steps would involve finalizing the conceptual hamlet master plan and formulating design guidelines.

In response to questions from the committee, it was noted that the trail costs do not include costs of acquisition and maintenance or any bridge work. The length of trail along the Normans Kill is the distance along the stream; it does not take ownership of parcels into consideration. The Town Highway Superintendent, who was in attendance, indicated that the Town spends roughly \$50,000 a year on sidewalk maintenance. George Leveille mentioned that a grant for work on the old Normans Kill bridge is being applied for by the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy. He also stated that the Route 85, VISTA, and hamlet projects will be getting underway shortly. Material on the hamlet master plan is expected from the Town's consultant by the end of the month.

The committee asked about whether this report covers all of the area that the Town Board tasked CACC to consider and what the next steps are. The consensus was that it does cover the area. The next step would be to present the Slingerlands Integrated Pedestrian Network plan to the Town Board. Mike DiPaolo suggested that a public meeting be held on the plan. The committee should forward any comments for E & K regarding the plan to staff.

In response to inquiries from Mike Waldenmaier and Nancy Heinzen, Brian McMahon clarified that the sidewalk cost estimate is based on concrete construction and does not include stormwater facility costs. John Mead asked about contributions to the area's pedestrian facilities as part of the VISTA project. George responded that mitigations for the VISTA project have not been worked out yet, and also that project build out could be 10 to 20 years. Mike DiPaolo would like to see pieces done now that can be done independent of the hamlet or VISTA. Ted Putney mentioned the trail along the Normans Kill as an independent component.

Libby Liebschutz stated that she wants to see shoulders included along New Scotland Road to accommodate bicycle traffic. John Mead pointed out that residents in other areas may feel overlooked if all the sidewalks are planned in one area of Town. George responded that the Town is looking at other areas of Town as well, such as Feura Bush Road and Kenwood Avenue.

Action Items:

Committee members should provide any final comments on the Slingerlands Integrated Pedestrian Network Plan to staff as soon as possible.

Staff will email the Chairman's PowerPoint presentation on the Open Space Funding Report to members for their review.

The subcommittee will meet to plan the January 8, 2007 public meeting on the Funding Report during the week of December 25th.

Next Meeting:

Monday, January 8, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Auditorium