

**TOWN OF BETHLEHEM
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON CONSERVATION (CACC)**

June 11, 2007 Meeting Record

Members Present:

Libby Liebschutz, Chair; Mike DiPaolo; Jeff Friedman; Nancy Heinzen; John Mead; Val Newell; Mike Waldenmaier; Caleb Wistar

Staff Members Present:

George Leveille, Rob Leslie, Debbie Kitchen

Chair Report:

- A. **Approval of May 14, 2007 Meeting Record:** Ms. Liebschutz asked the members if they had any final comments on the draft May 14 meeting record that was circulated. A couple of typographical errors were identified and the members voted to approve the meeting record. Mr. Leveille indicated the approved meeting record would be posted on the Town's web site.

Other: Ms. Liebschutz asked Mr. Leveille to discuss some staffing changes that were being planned. Mr. Leveille introduced Rob Leslie, a recently hired Senior Planner in the Department of Economic Development and Planning. He identified Mr. Leslie as his replacement as the department's new lead staff person to the CACC beginning with the July meeting. Mr. Leveille indicated that he would remain actively involved in CACC affairs in support of Mr. Leslie and he also indicated that Debbie Kitchen would continue to provide support to the CACC as well. Ms. Liebschutz led CACC members in welcoming Mr. Leslie's involvement.

Discussion of Task 2: Open Space Protection Programs

- A. **E-Newsletter Article:** Ms. Liebschutz led a discussion of the previously distributed copy of the article that appeared in the Town's June e-newsletter regarding the funding report. A number of suggestions were made regarding its content and adapting the message for future applications. Mr. DiPaolo and Ms. Newell suggested that we include information about regular CACC meetings in the Spotlight's Community/Monthly calendar and articles and correspondence.
- B. **Review of Draft Letter to January 8 Workshop Attendees:** The members discussed the previously distributed draft letter prepared by staff. The discussion covered many topics including what the CACC hoped to accomplish with the follow-up letter. In a general discussion about increasing the visibility of CACC activities, Ms. Heinzen suggested that a new CACC topic of interest be included in the town e-newsletter as a monthly series. It was proposed that each month an article about an open space funding opportunity or tool from the CACC's Open Space Protection Programs – Funding and Tools Report would appear. The Staff agreed to develop a list of proposed topics for upcoming e-newsletters.

With regard to the draft letter, it was agreed that the majority of the third paragraph could be eliminated exclusive of the reminder of the regular monthly meeting. It was also agreed that a specific staff person would be identified as the contact person for any follow-up questions or comments and that language would be included to help the recipient navigate to the CACC page on the Town's web site. Finally, it was agreed that Chairman Liebschutz and staff would finalize the letter and send it to the attendees.

C. **Public Comment on Task 2:**

- Linda Jasinski said that if we were to encourage citizens to call with questions that we needed to be sure to have appropriate expertise to respond or direct them to where they can get responses.

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Discussion of Task 3: Map of Existing Conservation and Recreation Land:

- A. **Review of Revised Map:** Rob Leslie presented the revised draft map to the members. Mr. Leslie stated that the revised map reflected a new title and changes in the color classification. Mr. Leslie indicated that private property owners were contacted via phone to confirm their inclusion on the map and he summarized his phone discussions. A group discussion ensued. The members identified some issues for clarification and refinement of the map. Mr. Leslie indicated that area calculations could be made of the different classifications. Nancy Heinzen questioned the title of the map as being somewhat inconsistent with its content and it was agreed that the map would be re-titled to reflect the contents as listed in the legend. After a group discussion of the map's purpose, it was agreed that a topic for consideration at the July meeting would be a discussion of "what does the map tell us?"
- B. **Presentation by Jason Baum, GIS Specialist:** Mr. Baum made a very informative presentation about the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as a data based tool to inform decision-making. He discussed theoretical concepts and provided a real time demonstration using the Town's internal GIS system including the layering of soils and zoning data on a GIS built map.
- C. **Public Comment on Task 3:**
- Linda Jasinski indicated the color of the conservation lands classification was difficult to view on the map. She suggested making the color brighter to better highlight conservation lands.
 - David Van Luven stated that the map title should be changed to reflect its classification content.

Miscellaneous Items

Nancy Heinzen stated that the Normans Kill Riparian Stream Corridor Study has been completed by the National Audubon Society of New York in conjunction with Albany County Planning Department.

Action Items:

- A. In conjunction with Chairman Liebschutz, staff to prepare and circulate a letter to the January 8 workshop attendees.
- B. In conjunction with Chairman Liebschutz, staff to develop a list of proposed CACC topics for upcoming e-newsletters.
- C. Staff to circulate a draft article for the Bethlehem Report outlining the CACC activities to date.
- D. Staff to re-review web site to ensure that all current materials are posted and accessible.
- E. Staff to post May 14, 2007 meeting record on web site.
- F. Follow up with Graham Cox, Audubon Society of New York regarding Normans Kill Riparian Stream Corridor Study.
- G. Explore potential for public service/community news such as meeting notices in the Spotlight.
- H. Staff to revise map.
- I. Staff to calculate the area of each classification.

Next Meeting:

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Monday, July 9, 2007 at 7:30 p.m. in Town Hall Room 101