

TOW Conservation Commission

Meeting Notes

Meeting of 04/24/06

Begin

7:35 pm

Attending

- Salvatore LaBruna
- Patricia Owen
- Jon Paul Heurich – Not attending
- Kevin Sumner
- Mike Leary
- Kate Fox

Review of Previous Meeting Notes

- Minutes were handed out and read individually. Nominated for approval by Kevin. Seconded by Pat.

Official Business

Tree Ordinance

- Important point – A tree ordinance needs a trained arborist (or forester) to oversee, administer and enforce it in order to be effective.
- Mostly existing laws are urban based, not rural so there are not many good example ordinances to model ours after.
- The best way to implement it may be to tie into a clearing and grading ordinance.
- If the clearing is considered “logging” then the DEC already has ordinances and regulates it. But, the definition of logging is imprecise and DEC “logging ordinance” is not often enforced for lot sizes like would be found in ToW.
- The storm water law will help also as if it is enforced then more trees will be preserved / there will be less mass clearing and grading to minimize the runoff impact.
 - 1 acre of disturbance is required to initiate the storm water law.
 - Storm water is currently a state law, but state is trying to get local towns to pass their own law and do their own enforcement.
 - However, there is currently no Wallkill local regulation that gives the town the authority to enforce the storm water regulations.
 - ToW doesn't appear to have the staff and infrastructure to enforce.
- Some members of the board are asking for a reduction of mass tree clearing on site plans.
- Can we share an arborist / wetlands inspector / etc. with other towns to minimize the cost / provide sufficient work for the inspector?
- Conclusion
 - We need to limit our number of focus points to avoid creating confusion with the town board as to our priorities.

- Therefore, the tree ordinance should be put on the backburner until we make progress on the storm water law, the stream and wetland ordinance and NRI.
- When we do move to looking at a tree ordinance again it should probably be packaged with a clearing and grading ordinance.

NRI

- Sal and Kevin attended the meeting with Montgomery CAC.
 - It was decided to request \$5k between the two towns for the computer and software.
 - There will be another meeting on June 8th to discuss the consultant issue.
- We need to ask the town if we need any approval / bid / whatever to hire the consultant.
- There will also need to be a memorandum of agreement between Wallkill and Montgomery to transfer money.
 - The town attorney should have some form of template to cover.
- Volunteer meeting is scheduled for May 22nd. How do we get the information out to the public to attend the meeting?
 - Sal is using his contacts with the Record to try to get a feature article in the paper.
 - Kate will work on creating a one page pin up to post on bulletin boards.
 - Post in the town hall, senior center, churches, post offices, etc.
 - Place a notice on the “bulletin board” on cable channel 6.
- Other questions that we will need to resolve at the next meeting
 - What maps do we need? How large should they be? Should we have personal sized copies to distribute?
 - Do we want to divide the tasks by geographical area or topic?
 - Can we obtain a copy of a completed NRI for guidance?
 - Can Karen Strong (or her department) provide additional information?
- Kevin will make a copy of a document titled “NRI: A Guide to the Process” and mail to everyone.

NYS Association of CACs

- Do we want to join?
 - General consensus is no. Better off associating with local CACs.

Planning and Town Board Issues

- Wallkill Manor
 - Before the Planning Board for an extension of their approval.
 - Previously approved, but delayed due to Town Board concerns and ownership questions.
- Shawangunk Rd.
 - 14 acre subdivision
 - Pat thinks it is wetland and we should investigate
 - Up for public hearing sometime in May

Future Projects

- Tree cover – Mike will investigate / spearhead.
 - Initial research has been completed and presented.

- This project will be rejoined once some other already in progress and/or higher priority projects are better under control.
- Sidewalks – Sal will investigate / spearhead.
- Reduction of pollutants in storm water runoffs
- Pace on-line course for land use. Everyone should complete.

Adjourned

Motion to adjourn by Kate. Seconded by Sal. 9:15.

Copies:

- Mike – 7 copies of 3 page meeting notes.
- Sal – 7 copies of a 1 page Agenda plus distribution of the annual report, Indiana Bat, letters, etc. adding up to 90 copies.