

June 13, 2005

Meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM. Present: S. LaBruna, P. Owen, C. Braithwaite, K. Fox, K. Sumner.

Expenses: Sal made 74 copies – agendas and handouts.

1. Kevin reviewed the inquiry he got from Karen Schneller-McDonald, a biologist/consultant working for the Town of Montgomery. They are interested in submitting a proposal to the Hudson River Estuary Program to do a town-wide natural resources inventory. They are inviting Wallkill to collaborate with them. The dollar limit for this category of grants is \$25,000. We have been trying to get our NRI going, in fact have started our agriculture inventory already, so this is a timely opportunity. Those present were in favor of the collaboration. Sal will contact Town Supervisor/Board to seek their endorsement and request a formal resolution (required for the grant proposal).
2. Wallkill Manor – Sal reviewed the comment letter he prepared with input from other Commission members. One addition since the version circulated via e-mail – the issue of pedestrian traffic on the bridges. We agreed we would mention in the letter how this project review pointed up to us the value of having a local wetland/watercourse protection law and a local stormwater law. Sal will make minor edits to the letter and distribute.

Pat asked whether soil material could be brought in to a site if existing conditions were unfavorable for a septic system leach field, with the perc test then being done in the imported material. Kevin said his understanding of Town regulations was that the natural soil on the site dictated what was permissible, following the Town's soil-based zoning.

A different discussion ensued regarding the need for a Town 'environmental' inspector. The attendees identified many beneficial reasons for such a position, especially, the higher level of control as opposed to relying on outside agencies, such as NYSDEC and Army Corps, to achieve environmental protection goals. Possibly, such a position could cover both wetland/watercourse law administration and erosion and sediment control/stormwater oversight. Kate described similar ideas which the Master Plan Committee desires to discuss with the Town Board. Kate thought a meeting with the Town Board on this topic should be pursued. We should find out more about how similar positions are structured and funded in other communities. Ideally, applicant fees would fund the position.

Kate reported that the MPC will be meeting with the Town Board this Wednesday.

The MPC would like the Town to keep doing business with planning firm they are currently working with. Kate mentioned they specialize in doing NRI-type work. Kevin noted that if the HREP proposal goes forward, a RFP could conceivably be

developed for consultant assistance on the NRI and the MPC's firm could put in a bid.

Kate said the MPC had extensive time invested in the MP process, and was anxious to be involved in following through on implementation of the plan. It is unclear at this point, though, if the current committee members will be appointed to this task.

Claude discussed opportunities he sees for student projects/university partnerships our commission. For example, SUNY New Paltz Engineering Dept.?

Sal visited the Harabowski (sp?) site with the applicant's engineer. They observed a possible vernal pool, which Sal recommended be further investigated by a qualified biologist. Sal also recommended that all on-site wetlands be mapped, even if they are distant from currently proposed improvements.

3. Tetz Proposal – PB consultants MHE gave Sal a copy of their latest comments on the FEIS, and responses from Alpine Environmental. Many of MHE's comments mirrored comments made earlier by the Conservation Commission. We did not feel that Alpine's responses adequately addressed the issues raised. There is not enough time for additional detailed review work since the PB meeting is this Wednesday, but we felt that a couple of major issues remained, and that they could be quickly summarized for the PB immediately. 1) The most important, perhaps, is the Cemetery Law compliance issue. How will they comply with this law, especially with regard to the 100 foot no excavation buffer provision vis-a-vis the access road? 2) Landscaping not beefed up, as reported. They apparently simply added an earth berm, with only White Pines. 3) Reports of "redundant stormwater treatments" are not evident on the Site Plan. Chairman will issue follow-up letter.

The idea of posting environmentally friendly info on the Town website for new-comers to the Town was brought up. Kevin said Cooperative Extension had prepared a similar guide a few years ago and he thought they were updating it. He will look into it.

Adjourn – 9:20 PM.

Submitted By:

Kevin Sumner