

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL MANGAEMENT COUNCIL**

**MEETING MINUTES
26 APRIL 2010**

PRESENT:

Ed Simonsen, Chairman, Kinderhook
Kathy Schneider, Stuyvesant
Karen Mort, Ghent
Harvey Weber, Copake
Jamie Purinton, Ancram
Karl Gabosh, Austerlitz
Kate Cashen, Claverack
Dan Marcus, Stockport
Louise Bliss-Kenneally, Greenport
Dean Vander Schaaf, Livingston
Ed VanNostrand, CC DOH

GUEST:

Michael O'Hara

REGRETS:

Scott Stackpole, Taghkanic
Frances Szasz, Germantown
Robert Kessler, Hillsdale
John Dax, New Lebanon
Deirdre Henderson, Chatham
Roland R. Vosburgh, Principal Planner (staff)
Theresa Mayhew, Cornell Cooperative Extension

ABSENT:

Melissa Sorman, Gallatin
John Adams, Canaan
Phil Leonard, Clermont

VACANT: City of Hudson

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ed Simonsen called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and noted that a quorum (10 out of 19 voting members) was present to conduct official business. Chairman Simonsen introduced Michael O'Hara, newly representative from Hudson and announced that the EMC now had representatives from all towns and the City of Hudson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The draft March 2010 EMC minutes were reviewed. ***Dan Marcus made a motion to approve the draft 3/22/10 EMC minutes as presented and seconded by Harvey Weber. Vote: All in favor.***

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Simonson reported that the paperwork for the EMC to join the NYS Association of EMCs was in process but was awaiting a tax exempt number. He also reminded the group that the Groundwater Resources and Local Planning Conference, which is co-sponsored by the EMC, would be held on April 28, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Columbia-Greene Community College. Planning Board members will receive 2

“credits” for their attendance. Congressman Scott Murphy is also sponsoring a Buy Local Symposium on Friday, April 29 in the Hudson Valley.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1) ***Speaker Series:*** Chairman Simonsen reported that he had spoken earlier in the day with Deirdre Henderson (who was unable to attend the meeting) about the speaker series, and she has received a verbal commitment from Ward Stone, Wildlife Biologist, NY Department of Environmental Conservation, to participate in the Speakers' series. Dr. Stone was asked to address the impacts of development on wildlife populations.. She is working on identifying a date for the event for late May or June. Other topics that were suggested by EMC members for future events included a speaker from DEC on evasive plants, Climate Smart Communities, Biodiversity and a representative from a town in Vermont that has focused its efforts on buying/growing organic.

Chairman Simonson said that he spoke to Commissioner Ken Flood and he did not have a problem if the EMC sent out press releases about these events or other related EMC work.

Louise Bliss suggested that a press release be prepared that describes the EMC and its members as a way of increasing public understanding of the group's mission and hopefully support for future projects and recommendations.

- 2) ***Town Comprehensive Plan Reviews:*** Chairman Simonsen explained that the purpose of this project is to determine the degree to which local comprehensive plans address environmental issues. Members who have not yet completed their reviews were encouraged to do so as soon as possible. Dan Marcus is in the process of reviewing the plans and compiling a chart to show the differences and similarities.

There was discussion that following review of the plans, the EMC should recommend or complete a County-wide Comprehensive Environmental Plan. It was suggested by some that this would entail a great deal of work. Some members suggested that providing the Board of Supervisors with an overall summary of the various town plans would be a good first step in this process. Several committee members volunteered to work on this overall effort: Dan Marcus, Michael O'Hara, Harvey Weber, Louise Bliss and Dean Vander Schaaf. Transportation issues will be included in the reviews.

- 3) ***EMC Website Review and Update:*** Katy Cashen reported that the homepage of the EMC website had been updated, along with the members list and minutes. She said that additional upgrades such as pictures were not done at this time due to other county priorities. It was suggested that major work products such as the Energy Recommendations and the Outdoor Wood Boilers (OWB) should be posted on the site. Some members suggested that the “look and feel” of the website should be improved. ***A motion was made by Dean Vander Schaaf and seconded by Michael O'Hara to request that the committee's Energy Recommendations and OWB Recommendations be posted on***

the site as part of the minutes section (the name of the section could be changed to Minutes/Work Products). Vote: All in favor.

Mike O'Hara offered to set up an e-mail listserv so that committee members could more easily communicate with each other. This would also provide an archive of the materials that are shared among committee members and staff so that new members would be able to review the materials. Michael will set up the listserv once he is added to the e-mail list by EMC staff.

- 4) ***DEC Proposed OWB Regulations:*** The committee discussed the proposed DEC regulations on Outdoor Wood Boilers, and whether local town efforts to regulate OWBs would be impacted. Kathy Schneider had done an analysis of the proposed state regs in preparation for a meeting in the town of Stuyvesant. She and Katy Cashen offered to prepare a factual document on the proposed state regulations as a resource for the Board of Supervisors. They will share the document with the EMC members for discussion and action at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Other items discussed brought up by members:

- *Conservation Advisory Councils:* The town of Ancram has an active CAC. One of the recent items of great concern is proposed cell towers in the town. The Ancram CAC drafted a paper on the potential environmental/health concerns of cell towers. Jamie Puritan offered to share the paper with EMC members.
- *10% Challenge:* Mike O'Hara provided a brief description of the non-profit organization that he works for called Sustainable Hudson Valley. He said that they work with local municipal officials to help them reduce their energy costs (goal of 10%). They also work very closely with citizens in the communities. The website address for more information is: <http://www.sustainhv.org/>

With no further business, the Harvey Weber made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kathryn Schneider. The EMC adjourned at approximately 8:35 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:

Katy Cashen, EMC Member

