

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
24 MAY 2010**

PRESENT:

Ed Simonsen, Chairman, Kinderhook
Jamie Purinton, Ancram
Louise Keneally-Bliss, Greenport
Karl Gabosh, Austerlitz
Robert Kessler, Hillsdale
Kate Cashen, Claverack
Scott Stackpole, Taghkanic
Kathy Schneider, Stuyvesant
Frances Szasz, Germantown
John Adams, Canaan
Melissa Sorman, Gallatin

ABSENT:

Phil Leonard, Clermont
Ed Van Nostrand, CCDOH

REGRETS:

Dan Marcus, Stockport
Karen Mort, Ghent
John Dax, New Lebanon
Deirdre Henderson, Chatham
Dean Vander Schaaff, Livingston
Theresa Mayhew, Cornell Coop. Ext.

GUEST:

Michael O'Hara (Hudson Nominee)

STAFF:

Roland R. Vosburgh, Principal Planner

VACANT:

City of Hudson

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ed Simonsen called the meeting to order at 7:05 and noted that a quorum (12 out of 19 voting members) was present to conduct official business. Chairman Simonsen noted that he incorrectly introduced Michael O'Hara as the City of Hudson EMC member at the April meeting. He is the City's nominee and is expected to be approved by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) at their June meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The draft of the April 2010 EMC minutes were reviewed. Chairman Simonsen noted that as well as the status of Michael O'Hara as the nominee for the City of Hudson, Mr. O'Hara was not qualified to second the motion (p. 2) to place the Energy Recommendations and the Outdoor Wood Boilers report on the website. Roland Vosburgh agreed to follow up with the website revision anyway. It was the consensus to recognize these two corrections via these minutes rather than revise the April minutes. *Bob Kessler made a motion to approve the 4/26/10 EMC minutes as presented and seconded by Scott Stackpole. Vote: All in favor.*

CORRESPONDENCE

None

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Simonsen reported that staff is still waiting for the NYSAEMC application paperwork to process the membership application.

Chairman Simonsen noted the value of EMC committees and encouraged committee chairs and co-chairs to take on issues totally and report back to the full EMC.

OLD BUSINESS

1) Speaker Series

Chairman Simonsen reported that Deirdre Henderson was unable to attend tonight's meeting. After a short discussion, the EMC decided not to try to schedule the first speaker for this spring and instead focus on the fall (September at the earliest) and not to extend an invitation to Ward Stone to speak on wildlife issues due to the recent media reports about a state investigation into allegations about Stone's actions at DEC Wildlife Pathology Lab. The topic for the fall meeting could be on DEC's climate change program. The meeting location is still planned for Taconic Hills Central School in Craryville.

2) Website Revisions

Chairman Simonsen noted that some revisions have been made to the EMC website. The only changes yet to be done are to add the EMC Energy Report and OWB Recommendations to a re-titled "Minutes/Reports" section of the website. Roland Vosburgh will contact Data Processing this week about this revision.

NEW BUSINESS

1) Update on Comprehensive Plan Reviews

The discussion included the following:

- Purpose of town comprehensive plan reviews summarized for the more recent EMC members as: 1) understand what environmental issues are viewed as county wide by both local governments and the EMC and 2) understand what environmental issues are currently identified at local government level and what issues might be overlooked. Dan Marcus has been facilitating the process.
- After polling those present the status of reviews is as follows: Completed: Canaan, Claverack, Gallatin, Austerlitz, Ancram, Kinderhook, New Lebanon, Stockport, Taghkanic, and Greenport. Not clear as to status of review: Clermont, Germantown, and

Ghent. Other comments: Hudson's comp plan is fairly recent (2002), Stuyvesant's existing plan is from the late 1990s, but a revision is underway, Chatham's and Livingston's plans are works in progress, Copake has finalized a vision statement (will be provided), and Hillsdale's revised plan will be done before next meeting.

- The project is viewed as having three steps: 1) analysis and summaries of comp plans, 2) identify where local government environmental issues and county wide EMC environmental issues converge and divide, and 3) produce some kind of document for the full EMC to review and forward to the Board of Supervisors.
- The EMC has not reached any consensus on the need for a county wide "environmental plan."
- There is a need to move this process ahead since 2010 is nearly half over.
- Excellent training available from NYS DEC Estuary Program on "Conserving Natural Areas" recently in the Town of Gallatin. Melissa Sorman will forward the website address to Chairman Simonsen to send out to all EMC members.

Karl Gabosh made a motion that EMC members complete the comp plan reviews for the remaining towns by the June EMC meeting and seconded by John Adams. Vote: Eleven yes, one abstention (Bob Kessler).

2) EMC Email List

Mike O'Hara reiterated his recommendation that the EMC take advantage of a centralized web address which serves as an online group facilitated system (e.g. CCEMC@googlegroups.com). This would allow members to post information (e.g. comp plan summaries) which would be accessible to all members acting as a sort of "institutional memory."

3) Outdoor Wood Boilers Fact Sheet (DEC proposed Part 247 regulations)

Kate Cashen and Karen Schneider prepared draft and circulated to EMC members. Kate described minor revisions that were made. She described this fact sheet as purely informational and designed to alert the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed state regulations. It would be up to the individual towns to decide whether to review and comment. This document, therefore, is neither a position statement by the EMC on the proposed regulations nor a recommendation to the BOS to take any position.

The discussion included the following:

- To the question of whether the EMC should make comments, it was suggested that it would not be possible to get EMC consensus on the proposed regulations and that there was not enough time to develop any comments. The consensus was that members were free to comment individually (not as an official EMC position).
- It was not clear whether a purely informational piece by the EMC would require BOS committee review and ok for distribution. Roland Vosburgh said he did not think so, but

he would consult with Commissioner Ken Flood on Tuesday as the Planning & Economic Development Committee would meet on Tuesday evening (5/25/10). If it was deemed necessary, it could be presented to the Committee on Tuesday.

- The issue of the impact of the state regulations on local government enforcement was raised. Roland Vosburgh read from the DEC Regulatory Impact Statement for Part 247 which stated that there are no local enforcement responsibilities in the state regulations.
- Several suggestions for revising the draft transmittal memo and the two page fact sheet were discussed and Kate Cashen agreed to make any suggested changes.

Kate Cashen made a motion to revise the transmittal memo by removing the redundant “bullet” points and add a comment on enforcement in the summary and distribute this to all EMC members for review and comment no later than 12:00 noon on 5/25/10, so that it could be provided to the BOS committee (if necessary) or distributed to the full BOS, and seconded by Bob Kessler. Vote: All in favor.

The EMC members expressed their thanks to Kate and Kathy for their excellent work in developing the OWB regulations fact sheet.

4) Cell Towers

Jamie Purinton described the efforts of the Ancram CAC to develop a paper on cell tower issues which was provided to all Town of Ancram boards and officials. A copy of this paper was previously distributed by email to all EMC members. She said that she simply wanted to share what here town CAC had done on this subject.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 pm.

Minutes prepared by:

Roland R. Vosburgh, Principal Planner