

Ulster County EMC

Meeting Minutes

March 29, 2017

Members in Attendance:

Dave Haldeman (Chair), Shawangunk
Cindy Lanzetta (Vice-Chair), at Large
Kristen Schara (Secretary), Hurley
John Sansalone, Gardiner
James Mays, Olive
Mary O'Donnell, Saugerties
Mark Ellison, Esopus
Mandy Wolfson, UC Dept. of the Environment

Margot Becker, at Large
Sarah Underhill, Wawarsing
Eric Stewart, Marbletown
William More, at Large
Virginia Starke, at Large
Anne Brandt, Woodstock

Guests: Maraleen Manos-Jones, Pat Courtney-Strong, Mid-Hudson Street Light Consortium

The meeting was called to order at 6:38 pm.

February minutes were approved as amended.

Presentation on Butterflies by Maraleen Manos-Jones

Butterfly species have been in existence for about 150 million years. The Monarch butterfly population has been reduced by 80% in the last 2 decades. Monarchs from Ulster County and east of the Rockies fly south toward Mexico in the fall. It takes 2-3 generations to make the round trip. Monarch butterflies will only lay their eggs on milkweed. Butterfly habitat has been destroyed through deforestation, wood poaching and pesticide spraying with glyphosate. Monoculture lawns eliminate plants such as dandelions for pollinators. Pollinator decline endangers food production. Planting butterfly gardens is encouraged. Mowing on roadsides too early in the season kills caterpillars. The DEP and the Town of Olive delay mowing to protect caterpillars and they stopped spraying glyphosate. Towns can vote to protect pollinators by approving the pledge to be pollinator friendly (see www.pollinatorfriendlytowns.org). The website www.spiritofbutterflies.com includes information on how to protect butterflies including beneficial plants, butterfly gardens, and pesticides. Ulster County could be a pro-pollinator area. In fall, collect seeds of milkweed plants and sow them in the spring. About 48% of plants sold to consumers are bought from big box stores. They are treated with neonicotinoids so that the poison is throughout the plant. It is a neural disruptor that causes pollinators to fail.

Old Business

None.

New Business

The Mid-Hudson Street Light Consortium is working to replace old streetlights with LED lights in every town. Municipalities can purchase lights or continue to lease. They are funded to help with the process. Over the next year, they will put out 2 RFPs to contract with installers to help municipalities; one for towns with less 400 lights, the other for towns with more than 400. Municipalities can save up to 65%. They are currently working with Kingston, Marbletown, Esopus, for example. There is a guide for working with Central Hudson and there is financing available. They will do an aggregated purchase of street lights to provide to small towns. Communities can join the purchase. It is nonbinding. In some communities, they found that the lights were too bright. The new lights require only 35% of the wattage to equal the old lights. Communities will be able to choose the spectrum produced. Towns can do a survey to design their lights. There are 3rd party vendors who can do a no-cost survey of lighting. Pat Courtney-Strong is willing to attend town meetings to provide information. Old lights need to be disposed of properly because of the presence of mercury. Towns should have a program in place for bulb disposal but UC also has a cleanup day for hazardous waste which towns can use. Central Hudson is responsible for removal. The towns already pay Central Hudson a fee for this.

Creek Week – Events can be listed in the Hudson Valley Ramble magazine which publicizes events for the month of September into October. Submit event to the Greenway by June 9th.

Topics for half day training - EMC Members should reach out to their boards to find out what is needed and to publicize opportunities that are available. Ideas include:

- There is a proposed update to the NYS wetlands law. It would address vernal pools, streamline mapping, reduce the acreage size to 1 acre among other issues.

- In the Town of Shawangunk, developers are required to submit a standard plan and a cluster plan. Most of the new developers are choosing cluster designs. Training could be done together with UC Planning with training credits offered.
- Solar energy issues (community solar, PSC net metering regulations, unified solar permits, community generated solar) could be of interest
- Flood plain map and flood plain management training. It could be done in conjunction with the NYCDEP Stream Management Program.
- The UC GIS Department might be willing to provide training on UC system.

Dept. of Environment Update/Legislative Update

- UC applied for a grant to process organic waste through composting. The contract will be in conjunction with UCRRA. There is also a compost grant for food waste generators to get equipment for collection and processing. The jail is the first site to be set up. The grant will cover the purchase containers and processing equipment.
- The new MS4 permits release has been delayed. The current permit will stay in effect for now. UC will offer a 4-hour contractor training for land disturbance that comes under a SPDES permit with UC Soil and Water District. Contractors must have a trained person on site during work.
- Many towns successfully applied for charging station grants.
- The Green Fleet report was delivered to Legislature on March 1.
- The UC Legislature is looking at ways to limit time on charging stations by county employees.

Roundabout

John Sansalone – The Gardiner ECC passed a resolution in support efforts to overturn the PSC ruling. They have some development projects coming up.

William More – The DEA will have their federally mandated pharmaceutical pickup days. The dates are on the DEA website. Each pharmacy should have a full color poster about proper pharmaceutical disposal methods. New technologies are lowering costs for solar cells by replacing silicon. There are new hazardous waste regulations that will update existing laws that will have an impact across the industry. Still waiting on regulations for medical waste from hospitals and medical offices.

Eric Stewart – Marbletown was awarded a charging station grant. They are doing a Solarize campaign with Olive and Rochester. They applied for the Unified Solar Code grant and are working on benchmarking. There is an effort to have a paint stewardship program. (There is a website to get information on how to dispose paint. The paint industry supports paint stewardship. There is a letter to sign to encourage the state to adopt these rules. Paint stores can opt to be a collection point.)

Cindy Lanzetta – Marlboro adopted the Unified Solar Permit last year and got reimbursed quickly. The CAC helped to put together a Solar Code using Town of Rochester's code as a model. The town has signed on with a group of municipalities to oppose the anchorage plan. The town passed a resolution to oppose the Pilgrim Pipeline. It would be within 200 ft. of the town's water supply. The UCRRA is having a hazardous waste collection day on April 22nd, and will have compost bins and rain barrels for sale.

Mark Ellison – Students from Cornell produced an assessment of the town's scenic resources. It will be used for the comprehensive master plan. They also analyzed the town of Hyde Park. The students will present it at the EB meeting on April 19th. For Earth Day, they are planning a project with the Water Advisory Board and they will hand out information about recycling. The event Hudson River on the Rise: Waterfront Planning for Communities and Nature, will take place at the Wallace Center on April 27th from 9am to 4pm.

Kristen Schara – A clean-up is scheduled at Onteora Lake on April 1st.

Dave Haldeman – Interfaith Earth Action Network will be having an Earth Day festival on April 22nd in New Paltz at the Dutch Reform Church, 9 am-5 pm.

Jim Mays – Olive is working with Marbletown and Rochester on Solarize Rondout. They are working on items on the Clean Energy Community action list. They have done some benchmarking. Some of the energy usage information is available because NYS requires it to be reported.

Mary O'Donnell -Saugerties was awarded the grant for EV charging stations. There will be 2 in the town and one in the village. They are working on the Unified Solar Permit. Benchmarking will be the next project. The Solarize program does qualify for the Clean Energy Communities program. They are forming an energy committee to work on the Clean Energy Communities program. They had a "Solar-bration" to celebrated the donation of a solar array by Direct Energy Solar. There are rebates and discounts available for solar installations. There was a meeting about Bristol Beach to look at the shore line for boating access. The town wants input from the community to generate ideas on how to use the park – passive use, venue for weddings, events rentals, educational venue, etc.

Anne Brandt – Woodstock will have an Earth Day event. They are working on EV charging stations. Cost and location are being assessed. One member is reviewing solar ordinances in the state to adopt for town. They have several wetlands laws on their website that might be useful for EMC members to use as models.

Sarah Underhill – There will be a panel discussion in Beacon on April 2nd at 7 pm in Howland Center including Jon Bowermaster and Manno Jo Greene. Topics include closing Indian Point and stopping the Algonquin Pipeline. Mohonk Preserve is working on connections with the Shawangunks and other natural areas.

Next Meeting – April 26th

Mr. Sansalone made a motion to adjourn. Mr. More seconded. Meeting adjourned unanimously at 8:40.

Handouts: Green Fleet Annual Report, 2016; Mid-Hudson Streetlight Consortium