

## Minutes of the Ulster County Environmental Council

Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> 2018

Attendees: John Sansalone, Kristen Schara, Ken Panza, Mark Ellison, Jim Mays, Dave Haldeman, William Moore, Amanda Lavalle, Emilie Hauser, Sarah Underhill, Margot Becker, Judith Karpova

Absent: Mary O'Donnell, Jim Littlefoot, Eric Stewart

Presenter: Peter Karis – Open Space Institute

August 2018 minutes approved

Speaker: Peter Karis – landscape architect working primarily on land conservation to extend parks and trails, Open Space has added 10% to state parks amounting to about 500,000 acres, with special concentrations on legacy areas like the Shawangunk ridge and the Hudson Highlands. Working hard to complete the 70 mile loop Kingston to New Paltz to Ellenville 9 now with only 7 miles yet to upgrade to complete the loop). New trail that just opened: river to ridge out of New Paltz to the Mohonk visitor center to Minnewaska. Also, the state is working hard to complete the trail connecting New Paltz to Highland and the bridge over the Hudson (hopefully completed by the end of the year). One advantage of OSI is that it can quickly acquire land that comes up for sale whereas state acquisition could take years) OSI, in general, is not in the business of preserving farm and (Scenic Hudson is more likely to do so) concerns raised about removing invasives from trails and collecting data on trail use.

Old business;

Waste management seminar updated: Nov 10<sup>th</sup> 8:45 till 1PM at UCCC in college lounge, 6 presenters, light snacks (bring your own mug) sign up online with EventBrite.

Danskammer – Marlboro is on the information list due to its proximity to the plant. Where is the coal ash stored, how much, how well protected from flooding? 5 new plants are on the drawing boards to replace Indian Point. Perhaps this plant may be a better site since the infrastructure is already intact. Article 10 has been invoked.

UC Plastic bag legislation – has passed the legislature. Still ongoing discussions between the legislature and the executive office over low income persons and how to educate the public. Are there still health concerns about reusable bags? Discussed all the extra bags we have that could be donated to the local food pantry. Current legislative discussion about requiring customer to request straws rather than being given them automatically.

Army Corps storm barriers: apparently, the Corps doesn't include sea level rise in its plans for these barriers. Maybe we should consider the Netherland model for protection from the sea?

Glidepath: perhaps each Town should consider a moratorium to update their zoning regarding these peaker plants. For example, in the Town of Ulster the laws concerning "Utilities", do those laws cover this type of power plant?

New business: the Rondout Creek Watershed Alliance was mentioned, a 20-acre parcel was clear cut for solar by Bluestone LLC (Cypress Creek was also mentioned)

DOE: Climate Week in Manhattan. Lower Esopus – Ashokan work group has noticed high flow in the Esopus Creek – 600 mil.gal/day since July since they want the reservoir at 75% capacity prior to a shut down for 10 to 12 weeks beginning Oct 29<sup>th</sup> (to repair the aqueduct, specifically to remove slime and deposits from the walls of the aqueduct). This will affect 4 towns in Ulster County. Also noted was high turbidity in the Sawkill. There is also a planned shut down of the Shandaken tunnel for 2 weeks. Mention was made of electric vehicle week. Herbicide spraying on the Catskill Mountain, railroad bed. Don't forget: Paul Hawkins at Omega Oct 19<sup>th</sup> through the 21<sup>st</sup> discussing 100 solutions to climate change.

Roundabout:

Olive: roadside clean-up. Working on their Natural resource inventory, and a flood advisory panel.

Esopus: Solarize campaign limited success, comprehensive master plan due Jan. 2019.

Rochester: Natural Heritage/Open Space plan was entered into the Town registry, town building energy audits continuing.

Woodstock: short term rental AirBnB garbage problems, hemlock wooly adelgid destruction, discussions about green infrastructure, pending grants for Sawkill flooding, ? something about Cooper Lake Note: the PSC has discontinued arrangements with Central Hudson to replace street lights with LEDs.

Marbletown: 100% renewable proposal

Bill: Alaska is a must visit

Kingston: Open Space public meeting, high water festival Oct 19<sup>th</sup>

Hurley- working on street lights and getting reimbursements from OSI

Next meeting Oct 24th