

Ulster County EMC Meeting Minutes October 25, 2017

Members in Attendance:

Dave Haldeman (Chair), Shawangunk
Kristen Schara (Secretary), Hurley
Emilie Hauser, Kingston
Eric Stewart, Marbletown
Jim Littlefoot, New Paltz
Jim Mays, Olive
John Sansalone, Gardiner
Amanda LaValle, UC Dept. of the Environment

Judith Karpova, Rochester
John Sansalone, Gardiner
Mark Ellison, Esopus
Mary O'Donnell, Saugerties
Virginia Starke, At Large
William More, At Large

Guest: Julie Noble Chair of the 2017 Conference on the Environment

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

September minutes were approved.

Speaker – Julie Noble, Chair of the Conference on the Environment 2017

Julie provided the current agenda for the NYSACC/NYSAEMC conference to take place on Nov 17 at The Chateau in Kingston. It will start with breakfast and opening remarks by UC Executive Mike Hein and Kingston Mayor Steve Noble. The agenda includes: Sustainable Urbanism (e.g. planting trees, designing green spaces), Clean Energy Panel (geothermal, community solar, changes to PSC policies, energy efficiency, NYSERDA opportunities), Coastal and Inland flooding (oceanic flooding, tidal wetlands impacts, Cornell Climate Adaptive Design Studio, inland flooding), Clean Transportation (electric vehicles and infrastructure, DEC incentives, local initiatives). There will be a keynote speaker during lunch. After lunch: Climate Change Resiliency (water sense program, source water protection, extreme heat events) Clean Energy Communities (Hudson Valley success stories, best practices, ins and outs of the program) NRI's/Land Trusts and Muni (how land trusts can work with municipalities), and Clean Food Economy (the hierarchy of food recovery). On Nov 18 attendees can join a field trip centered on the food economy which includes the Hudson Valley Farm Hub, the Farm Bridge at former IBM kitchen at Tech City which works to package and process produce from local farms, the UCCRA commercial compost facility. Registration can be done online through the NYSACC website or by mail. Cost is \$60. Sponsorships and exhibitor packages are available. The Chateau will have a room with exhibitors. It is circulating on Facebook, Mailchimp, and press releases. Julie requested that EMC members promote the conference to their boards and colleagues and to assist in finding sponsors (e.g. consulting firms, engineering firms, environmental groups) to help defray the cost.

Old Business

A letter outlining concerns with the current bill concerning pharmaceutical disposal was sent. The governor's pocket veto blocked the bill. William suggested sending the UC Legislature a model bill for consideration.

New Business

William suggested that the EMC advise the UC legislature to direct the UCRRA to have a collection for small industrial hazardous waste generators (less than 220 lbs.). It usually works out to less than a 55-gallon drum. Both Orange and Dutchess Counties have programs. The process is currently expensive for businesses in UC. The UCRRA has been successful with household hazardous waste (HHW) collections, and a small generator collection could be done the next day. The advantages of this program are in providing cost reductions to the regulated community and reducing the carbon footprint, among others. The waste generator would pay fees to offset the cost. There is no reimbursement available. It would ensure that waste is disposed of properly. (Q - Does the generator bear any risk? A - They are allowed to transport their waste; it is their liability. Transport has not been an issue in other counties.) Dave and Bill will submit a request to the UC Legislature Energy and Environment Committee (EEC). The next UCRRA Board meeting is on Nov 21. EMC members could get the support of the UC EEC and request UCRRA do this. Coordination costs could be covered by generators. The goal is to limit the buildup of material at generator's facilities. They can store up to 2200 lbs. but can only transport 220 per month. Orange County has a collection 6 times a year; small generators on Friday, HHW on Saturday. John motioned to authorize William and Dave present the request to the UC legislature. Jim Mays seconded. Motion approved.

Dept. of Environment Update/Legislative Update

Amanda met with personnel at UCRRA to work on the food composting grant. UCRRA will be upgrading to handle more food waste. They currently process 22 tons per year. They plan to buy a bagging machine to sell or distribute compost in smaller quantities. It will improve operation and marketability of the product. They are currently only receiving food waste from commercial facilities. (Q – What about waste from food pantries?) UC will start diverting food waste from the jail to UCCRA. They sent out RFPs for hauling. Two firms have replied so far. The containers are 48 gallons. The input must be free of nonfood waste. They performed a data analysis to determine possible sources of food waste so that haulers could create routes for collection

The former Town of Ulster landfill solar installation has started construction. The energy will offset UC government usage. A conference, “Nature Across Boundaries: Keeping Lands and Waters Connected”, is scheduled for Nov 6 at Mohonk. The 2018 UC budget includes new initiatives for water well testing and for a Water Quality Coordinating Committee. The EMC could have input through a subcommittee to help with planning.

UC Legislature Energy and Environment Committee – no report.

Roundabout

Dave Haldeman – Shawangunk’s landfill does not qualify for solar installations. The slopes are too steep. The ECC is working on restricting roadside herbicide along state roads.

Emilie Hauser – The city got \$50,000 grant for a tree inventory using GPS to locate all street trees and single trees in parks. The Climate Smart Communities Committee is interested in an energy conservation expo in the spring of 2018. (Q - Does anyone work with Interfaith Power and Light?) There is a community solar program sign up for renters, condominium dwellers, and nonprofits. A workshop is planned concerning dams on tributaries of the Hudson River at Norrie Point on Nov 8 to learn about effects of dam removal. They will address aquatic species movement impacts from smaller dams that no longer serve a purpose.

Eric Stewart – The proposed fire training center is considering new sites. The ECC is interested in passing regulations for restricting pesticide use along roads. The town board took up the pharmaceutical waste issue.

Jim Littlefoot – When the Hotel 87 was demolished, the contractor took all the asbestos from the building and put it in the swimming pool. The ECB had an emergency meeting to address this. Jim is going to meet with the town and village supervisors. They are also working on the CVS proposal. CVS is not complying with requests to state where the fill is coming from. The building is to be 15,000 SQFT with parking for 100 cars.

Jim Mays – The final report on Solarize Hudson Valley was issued. Lighthouse Solar received a total of 29 signed contracts: 8 From Marbletown, 9 from Rochester, none from Olive, and 12 from the rest of UC for a total of 302.245 kW. Hudson Solar received 17 signed contracts: 8 from Marbletown, 2 from Rochester, 3 from Olive and 4 from the rest of UC for a total of 114.457 kw. The CAC is working on flood remediation in Boiceville and a potential waste water treatment plant in Shokan. Catskill Watershed Corp hired Chazen Consulting to perform a study on buildable land in watershed territory. The CAC is doing a site by site review to determine buildability. The town hired the consultants to consider 4 possibilities- build a berm, relocate, do nothing, or raise buildings. The sentiment is to do nothing because insurance rates will force most businesses to close or leave. There is pressure from homeowners for a relocation program.

John Sansalone – Glamour camping or “Glamping” at a tree nursery is being proposed. It does not fit into current zoning codes. They continue to work on the watercourse and wetland protection law.

Judith Karpova – The ECC is finalizing their natural heritage inventory and open space plan. They are moving ahead on the stream naming project. They are consulting with the historical society to find names with a historical basis to aid in legitimacy.

Kristen Schara – The town board reviewed the draft open space plan and had no comments. The CAC will have a public meeting for input. They are pursuing LED streetlight replacement through the Hudson Valley Streetlight Consortium.

Mark Ellison – The town had a Vision 20/20 comprehensive planning meeting. Sixty residents attended. They discussed the survey. UC Comptroller Elliot Auerbach reviewed the effect on taxes. They have a grant to work with the Town of Lloyd for signage along the Black Creek corridor.

Mary O'Donnell – The CAC had a public meeting on Bristol Beach to report the status. The CAC formed an invasive species committee to focus on water chestnut and milfoil. There are stretches on the Esopus that cannot be traversed. They are exploring short and long-term solutions. Resources for reduction/removal are being looked at. Depending on how extensive the problem is in UC, the government may play a role in mitigation. There are DEC permitted herbicides available. Hand-pulling or harvesters are options. (Amanda – UC Soil and Water Conservation District may be helpful. Q- Would the county be willing to provide equipment and operators for rental to communities for billback?) Esopus has a harvester, but the Esopus is too shallow. Public education and cleaning for boats was also suggested.

Next meeting – Nov 29, bring food for potluck. No meeting in December.

John made a motion to adjourn. William seconded. Meeting adjourned unanimously at 8:40.

Handouts:

Flyer - "Hudson Undammed" Workshop and Conversation

Flyer – "Community Solar is Here", Solarize Hudson Valley

Meeting Agenda – "Nature Across Boundaries: Keeping Lands and Waters Connected"