

Ulster County EMC Meeting Minutes July 30, 2014

Meeting was called to order at 6:45 PM

Members in Attendance:

Steve Noble, Chair, At Large

Kristen Schara, At Large, Hurley

Joe Liuni, Rosendale

Catherine Quick, Esopus

Hank Bartosik, Wawarsing

Amanda Lavalley, UC Dept. of Environment

Emilie Hauser, Kingston

Virginia Starke, Hurley

Ulster County Dept. of Environment Update

The seminar sponsored by the UC Planning Department regarding the use of technology in planning and environmental analysis held in June was well attended. Dennis Doyle is willing to visit any town that is interested in learning more about the technology resources available.

New Business

Creek Week

Creek Week is scheduled for September 13-21. Over 20 events were held last year. Steve will send out a listing of the events and they will be posted on the UC website. There will be a planning meeting for groups that are interested in sponsoring events.

Sustainable Energy Loan Program

The UC Legislature has announced a public hearing at 7:05 on August 19th regarding the proposed Sustainable Energy Loan program. The proposed law is designed to help fund renewable energy projects and energy efficiency improvements by property owners through payments on their county tax bills.

The NYC DEP will host a youth fishing day at the Ashokan Reservoir on September 21.

Tour of Bioretention Project

Amanda led a tour of the bioretention project recently completed at the UC parking lot adjacent to the Dept of Environment Offices at 17 Pearl St. The project combined the use of permeable pavers and a rain garden on the edge of the parking lot to reduce runoff. Details of the project including the plants recommended for a rain garden are on the UC website.

Member Roundabout

John Sansalone – The Gardiner ECC met with their attorney to work on revisions of their proposed water resource protection law. A similar law enacted by New Paltz was recently upheld by the state court of appeals. There was an informative webinar by the EPA regarding the increase in toxic algal blooms in fresh and salt waters which may be related to nutrient overloading. A bill passed the NYS Assembly banning the sale of products that contain synthetic microbeads. There was an informative meeting of the Hudson River Environmental Society.

Catherine Quick – The Town of Esopus is installing solar panels over their former landfill. The primary goal will be to use the electricity to cut the operating costs of the water treatment plant. The Environmental Board has gained some new members. This is the third year that town volunteers cut back water chestnut vines along the Hudson River shoreline. There is evidence that this is helping to reduce the occurrence and thickness of the vines and native plants seem to be rebounding as a result.

Joe Liuni – The Rosendale CCE is working is undertaking an audit of the sewer plant as a Climate Smart Communities project. After the Marbletown municipal staff moves in to their offices at the former Rosendale Elementary School, they can apply for multi-town grants to improve the energy efficiency of the building. The seminar on the Emerald Ash Borer was helpful. There should be use for the resulting waste wood. Central Hudson is helping to remove many trees. The boundaries of the infestation have expanded quickly.

The Ulster County Sportsmen's Federation participated in the Girl Scout Camporee at the UC Fairgrounds by teaching fishing basics and fly fishing. The UC Youth Fair is scheduled for June 14th at Kelder's Farm. There will be fishing, archery, BB guns, bird house building, and a police dog, among the activities. They expect around 230 children.

Kristen Schara – The Hurley BioBlitz had to be postponed because the staging site was underwater. They continue to work on revising their Open Space Plan. Their consultant has suggested that the council study ways to increase recreational opportunities.

Jim Littlefoot – Riverkeeper did not receive the grant to study the presence of pharmaceutical waste in the Hudson. The Emerald Ash Borer training was helpful to the Planning and Conservation Boards. An EC representative is attending Planning Board meetings as needed to stay informed.

Steve Noble – The Kingston CAC had a successful habitat presentation. They are starting the open space planning process.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:55.