

Pawling Conservation Advisory Board - Minutes

Thursday 4/24/25, 6pm, American Legion Building

Present: Robert Bergdall – Chairman, Mark Chipkin – Vice Chairman, Lou Trombetta, Steven DiFalco, Laura Facchin, Rick Wilson, Marie Vedder, Joseph Willie, Deborah Stewart

Absent: Lori Asquith

1) Nanobubbler letter

- Discussion of potential for reduction or elimination of herbicides used in Green Mountain Lake (Nautique & Cutrine Plus).
- Lou – Noted current chemicals are probably best available herbicide solution.
- Rick – Curious if water quality is tested for bathing purposes; this is likely but unknown.
- Unanimous vote to adopt letter.

2) Road Salt – Lou

- Reviewed paper giving overview of road salt use and how it is higher in NYS than any other state. Group will read this more thoroughly before next meeting and discuss in greater detail.
- Impacts are environmental, and affect human safety
 - i. Rock salt can contain traces of other metals
 - ii. Rock salt can lead to the release of other metals stored in surface rocks.
 - iii. Impacts to drinking water well supplies is most urgent and persuasive argument
- Best practices include:
 - i. Use of sand in substitution for salt or mixed in a higher ratio with salt.
 - ii. Brining roads instead of using rock salt
 - iii. Use of modern plow equipment with multiple blades

3) Real Time Hydrologic System Monitoring of Whaley Lake – Rick

- <http://rths.us/whaleylake.cgi>
- Rick provided overview of concerns related to the construction of the present dam and how there is pooling occurring in this lake. During heavy rain there is insufficient outflow from the dam and this can lead to sudden sizeable changes in the level of the lake.
- Lou - Noted that the shallow depth of the lake is also an area of concern as this leads to higher water temperatures and the growth of bacteria.
- The group discussed how the CAB has an interest in the water quality in Whaley Lake and the subsequent environmental impacts, however several board members expressed concern about the limited number of residents affected. The group agreed to continue to focus on projects and areas that broadly impact the town as a whole.

4) Pawling tree planting project – Mark

- Assisting Wendel Webber with phase two of tree census and planting project.
- Initial meeting with project volunteer James Bellucci set for 4/26 @ 8:30am.

5) Prior Board records – Rick

- Reviewed tracking spreadsheet Rick Created, now available in Google drive, and various means of sorting and searching through the content therein.
- Discussed standout example of work of the prior board; letter from Sybill Gilbert to Dino DiLaurentis.

6) Website & Communications - Laura & Deborah

- Mission Statement – Laura and Deborah feel it will be helpful to have a CAB mission statement as part of the CAB website. This will be informative to the public and also help guide the content placed on the site. They will be drafting a mission statement to be reviewed during the next meeting.
- Coordination with Town – This is going well, there is a page where we can place a link to the separate CAB website.
- URL for Website – Discussed potential website addresses. Laura will make a final decision based on availability. Group agreed that a shorter site address would be desirable.
- Rollout of website – Reviewed phased outline of content based on vision documents reviewed during last meeting. The group agreed with the thoughtful choices of core areas to begin with.
- Logo – What to use as Board logo? A logo from a CAB legacy document would be preferable if available. We can always develop a new logo if needed/desired.
- Contact link – Discussion of how to handle incoming correspondence from a “Contact us” form on the CAB website. Once this is active, we will need a system in place to reply timely. Discussed perhaps having a dedicated e-mail address that could be checked by a rotation of designated individuals.
- Social media – Lori and Debbi recommended implementing a social media page at a later date. The group agreed that this is a lower priority than the website.

7) Google Drive – Marie

- Demo - Marie provided a demonstration of basic use and functions; files can be accessed through a web interface or via a file explorer available via the Google Drive application.
- Permissions - As agreed by the group, Marie will be implementing editing permissions based on current project assignments and will also be creating a working folder. Board members should feel free to add project folders as needed.

8) Natural Resource Inventory

- 4/23 Meeting with Dutchess Land Conservancy – Steven, Mark, Robert – DLC was supportive of the Board and agree with our plan to develop and NRI and subsequent Open Space Inventory (OSI). Suggested potential outreach to Housatonic Valley Association.
- Oblong Land Conservancy – Lou shared a document with the group about the benefits of conservation easements and how having an OSI in place supports organizations like OLC and DLC in granting easements to landowners.
- DEC Hudson River Estuary Program, 5/7 meeting- Robert, Steven, Mark and Marie have a meeting with several representatives for the Estuary Program on 5/7. The Estuary Program

funds grants for a variety of conservation projects including the creation of NRI's and OSI's. Grants are usually released for bid May – July of each year. 5/7 meeting goals include:

- i. Learn about grant process
 - ii. Identify factors to improve score
 - iii. Discuss potential for concurrent NRI/OSI
- Potential Meeting with Town Board – Mark will be having a preliminary meeting with Supervisor Schmidt and Councilman McCarthy to discuss the desired amount of detail for a presentation on this topic. Robert and Steven feel comfortable giving a presentation on the overall process and desirability of an OSI but do not have figures on what the specific expenditure involved in a grant would be.

9) Solar and EV Charging – Joe

- The initial contractor approached by the town was too big, only worked on 1-3 MW projects. The group discussed the importance of not installing solar on virgin sites, and targeting installations on brownfield sites, building roofs, and parking lots.
- EV Charging – Laberge Group provided Joe with an introduction to Jason West, Sustainability Director for the City of Albany. Joe is attempting to setup a meeting with him to discuss the grants that are available for charging.

10) MS4 – Robert for Lori – Lori is working on identifying specific land-owners and targeting educational materials appropriately. She indicated that she does not need any assistance at this point

11) Public Comment - None