

## **Pawling Conservation Advisory Board - Minutes**

**Thursday 5/22/25, 6pm, American Legion Building**

Present: Robert Bergdall – Chairman, Mark Chipkin – Vice Chairman, Lou Trombetta, Steven DiFalco, Rick Wilson, Joseph Willie, Deborah Stewart, Lori Asquith

Absent: Marie Vedder, Laura Facchin,

### **1) Guest Speaker – Town of Pawling Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds Wendel Weber**

#### **a) Whaley Lake monitoring,**

- Lou – Concerned about negative impacts to ecology by the fall draw-down that has been instituted for weed control. The draw down impacts many non-target organisms in the lake and has no impact on some weed species such as common reed (*Phragmites australis*), and purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*).
- Wendel – Fall draw down is now a change in level by 4 ½” instead the 8” with the prior weir boards.
- Rick – Expressed concern about pooling in lake during heavy rainfall events. Since the installation of the monitoring system Wendel has been able to actively manage the valve. Ultimately a passive system of control via spillway alternation may be desirable.

#### **b) Town nuisance permits for geese and beaver**

- Lou noted waterfowl or other animals should not be fed. Discussed potential for a Town law prohibiting wildlife feeding. Research would need to be done on what is in current code and model legislation.

#### **c) Tree planting**

- The current urban forestry management plan maps all trees in the park and village within 25’ of a public road. Completed by SaveATree.
- Working to restart the Tree Board to locate grants to fund tree planting. Mark volunteered to join and will be following up with Jim Bellucci.
- Town was previously a “Tree City USA” with Arbor Day Foundation, however this has lapsed and would need to be re-established.
- Wendel – Would welcome potentially developing educational signage to be deployed with new trees.

#### **d) Community garden**

- Pollinator garden along east side of site is incorporated into plan.
- Angela Jobe (sp) will be advising Wendel on location of water spigot

#### **e) EV Charging**

- Laberge Consulting has given ok for Joe and Wendel to seek grants for this.
- Next round for car charging is expected to be released in next few weeks.
- Likely installation sites at Town Hall and Lakeside
- Most grants are 80/20 with the Town providing match via in-kind services.

#### **f) Solar**

- Town electric bills tripled in January due to a mix of supply and delivery charges. There are 29 separate meters associated with the Town’s account.

- Initial contractor was examining brownfield site north of the transfer station but deemed it not big enough and is Village property.
  - Current contractor is preparing a proposal for installation on rooftops.
  - 30% solar investment tax credit may be repealed at end of 2025.
- g) Nanobubbler letter
- Wendel is still waiting to hear back on this grant.
  - The NYS Department of Health tests the lake water weekly.

## 2) MS4 – Lori

- Combination of mapping done by NYS DEC and Dutchess County Planning makes the creation of an owner-by-owner list of the parcels within the focus area relatively straightforward.
- This would be more specific than the generalized town-wide education done by most municipalities, and make it possible to set intervals for distribution of educational materials based on target areas and land use.
- Mark – Wants to ensure we reach the whole town population to educate them on the importance of this topic.

## 3) Road Salt – Lou

- Discussion of article provided during April meeting.
- Robert – Had brief discussion with Highway Superintendent Bob Brill after 5/14 town board meeting. He outlined several challenges
  - i. High cost of new improved plow equipment.
  - ii. Ineffectiveness of brine methods prior to wet snowstorms.
- Brief discussion of salt vs aggregate mix used. Rick will inquire with Peckham Materials if there is an ideal mixture to use.
- Lou - Discussion of harms related to asphalt driveways and the desirability of gravel or other permeable surfaces. The group discussed how use of permeable surfaces and swale areas could potentially be incentivized for new construction projects in the town.

## 4) Website & Communications - Debbie

- Debbie read excellent draft of language for home page of website. Rob will distribute this to the group for review prior to the next meeting.
- Laura is making progress on website but was unable to make it to tonight's meeting.
- Any photos of scenic areas in town would be helpful in website creation and can be posted on the Google drive.
- Facebook – Group discussed potential content moderation challenges in creating social media accounts for the CAB. Agreed that “meeting people where they are” and increasing engagement is important.
  - i. Will need a policy to moderate content
  - ii. Debbie will reach out to FROGS to find out how they approach this on their page
  - iii. Laura's mentor – CAB President in another municipality may also be an asset

## 5) Natural Resource Inventory – Robert, Steven, Mark, Marie

- 5/7 meeting with DEC
  - i. DEC advised we be deliberate about selecting what we want to accomplish with any grant. Support of the Town Board will be essential.
  - ii. Stressed that there are conservation options that do not rely upon completion of an OSI. However, an OSI has the advantage of an analysis step to identify and incorporate multiple values for the community.
  - iii. [Pace Land Use Law Center](#) – Non NRI/OSI options
  - iv. The grant administration process would require quarterly check-ins and take as much as 2 years after acceptance of application.
- Review of 5/14 presentation to Town Board
  - i. Presentation went well, available on [YouTube](#), provided overview of projects and general direction of CAB.
  - ii. Several questions about existing documentation. Cathy Giordano provided additional documentation after the meeting which has been added to the [Google Drive under “Prior Board NRI & Related Docs”](#)
  - iii. Discussed inventory of Significant Natural Areas located previously. This was likely developed in the 1990’s as a companion to the NRI
- Robert – Feels that re-establishment of NRI is still high priority as this is already written into town code regarding CAB and would mandate 45-day CAB review of some Planning Board matters.
- Robert, Steven, Mark and Marie will work to review extant documents and gather further information about open space preservation options.

6) Solar and EV charging - Joe

- Discussed with Wendel Webber – see 1(e) above.

7) Continuing education – Rick

- Rick will serve as a clearinghouse for continuing education events moving forward. Please forward all opportunities to him via e-mail.
- Rick will maintain a tracking spreadsheet of events and send a monthly digest to the group.

8) Town of Dover clean-up day -

- Lori provided Robert with information regarding this event last week.
- A town clean-up event has been of interest since the public comments of the initial CAB meeting.
- Issues of liability and worker road safety would need to be addressed if we’d like to do such and event in 2026.

9) Summer meeting schedule

- Robert asked that everyone evaluate their ability to make it to a 7/24 or 8/28 meeting.
- Topic to be discussed again in June.

10) Public comment - None