

Conservation Commission

July 11, 2017

Attendance:

Members: Elisa Zazzera, Haven Colgate, Sharon Kivowitz, Jean Hamerman

Community:

Brian Krapf brianf_krapf@yahoo.com

Shannon Rooney Shanrooney3@gmail.com

Leslie Barbagallo leslie@tallyhee.com

Ann Marie Ross rossannemar@gmail.com

1. Uniontown Issues

A post on facebook related to Uniontown development resulted in putting this issue on the Conservation Commission agenda. Parks and Recreation Department has been working on the upgrade of Uniontown for several years. A consultant has evaluated how to expand parking to accommodate need and improve safety as well as to develop a regulation-sized baseball field. The impact of this expansion is to move the playground and push into the woods, which will require loss of some significant trees. Renderings of the proposed site are available for review and public comment. However, they do not show the existing field superimposed with the upgrades, so the true impact is hard to evaluate.

These were the questions raised:

- Trees: Do we know how many trees will be cut down? Is it possible to save at least some of the more mature trees? In the renderings, trees are featured. Are those actual trees that will be planted? What size is envisioned? What is the tree budget? What shade component is planned for the playground? Can the Village commit to a tree bank to plant new trees elsewhere to compensate for the loss?
- Drainage: How has flooding/runoff been addressed? Will there be permeable pavement for the parking lot? Is the walkway paved and is drainage an issue? Is there a possibility of using the parking lot for any other purpose?

Lastly, there was a request that the architect create a rendering that superimposes the new design over existing conditions so that changes can be clearly identified and understood. A public forum is scheduled for Thursday, July 14th. Jean is to email these questions to Trustee Lemon.

2. Carbon Tax

Sharon reported on the forums that have been taking place in Westchester to increase awareness about a NYS-driven Carbon Tax and to build an advocacy group for legislation. A petition has been developed and was presented to CC members for their ratification.

We understood that the petition is in final form and is being considered by a number of municipalities in NYS. After reviewing the petition, which is a non-binding call for NYS Assembly and Senate representatives to support and co-sponsor legislation to impose a tax on GHG-emitting fuels, Sharon made the motion for the CC to approve. Elisa seconded and the four members present ratified it. Trustee Lemon can present to the full Board of Trustees for a vote.

3. Hillside Woods Education Campaign

While there seems to be general consensus that an enclosure of Hillside woods is a critical measure to preserve the woods, there remain many questions that the CC would like to address as it puts together a public education campaign. These questions include:

- Would the fencing surround the entire woods or a portion? How close to the perimeter would it be for aesthetic purposes? What is the quality/composition of the fence? How many entrances would there be? What is the budget for the fence?
- A fence would not naturally bring back native plants and restore the woods. Seed stocks have died. What would the Village need to do about planting, watering, maintenance to revive the woods? What is the annual budget needed to address this? How about maintenance of the fence?
- Would the deer birth control program continue?
- Where would the deer go once they are excluded from the woods? Would they roam the streets? Sleep in our backyards? Stone Barns installed an enclosure, which was unsuccessful in regenerating the ecosystem over a 10-year period.
- If deer gets into the enclosure, how do we get them out?
- What should be the nature of the public education campaign?

4. Energy Working Group

Dan is organizing this working group. Some CC members will be on the Working Group and report to the full CC.

5. HOH Green Team

The Hastings Green Team disbanded years ago and has left a void in contact and green strategy/implementation between the village staff and the Conservation Commission. We have two recommendations:

1. Organize an informal meet-and-greet session to provide information about the CC to Village staff. There are several new Village employees who could benefit from hearing about the Commission. We could encourage them to attend meetings by having a CC meeting at 5pm (i.e. right after work) on a quarterly or bi-annual basis.
2. We will request that Fran Frobels be directed to attend a CC meeting on a quarterly basis in order to exchange information and provide updates. Sharon will ask the Mayor to make this request.

The members also felt strongly that greater exchange among the various Village Commissions would facilitate greater communication and collaboration. Haven will work on planning an event to include all commissions.

6. Fostering Resiliency - next meeting

7. Pesticides

This remains an issue the CC would like to address. Sharon will email the Hastings Takes Action group to see if there is someone who would like to volunteer to take on public education of the pesticide issue, including spraying, notification, alternatives, working with landscapers, etc.

8. Other Recycling:

- Elisa will draft an update on what's recyclable and what's not.
- Textile recycling: we are looking at new firms and hope to have a proposal for a Village-supported textile recovery campaign shortly.

8. Other:

- CEC Grant: submitted - waiting to hear
- PACE land use: submitted - waiting to hear