

Conservation Advisory Commission
Minutes of the May 16, 2013 Meeting

Present: Curt Pueschel, Cynthia Stephens-Westerman, Victor Lamoureux, Steve Appel, Michael Restuccia, Cole Moore

Excused: Dick Pastore, Shep Bennett, Linda Green

Minutes of the April meeting had been approved by e-mail. The next regular meeting of the CAC will be on June 20, 2013.

During the previous meeting it was decided that the CAC would begin touring Town parks on April 29th. That first trip was later rescheduled for April 30th. Harold Moore Park, the wetland adjacent to Moore Park, and African Road Park were examined. Tree diversity was inventoried and some of the larger ash trees were measured. Issues with streambank slumping, invasive species, and other features were noted.

Subsequently, Cole Moore downloaded parcel maps of African Road Park and Stair Park from the Broome County website and distributed them to members by e-mail.

On May 7th, we visited Stair Park and Fuller Hollow Park and took notes on features that might need to be addressed.

The principal purpose of the April 18th regular CAC meeting was to decide how best to move forward on our parks inventory. It was clear that we need to have maps in hand before our trips to avoid uncertainty that features of possible concern may or may not be on Town property.

In some parks, such as Stair Park, a significant portion of the property is on a steep slope and, for that reason, it is not suitable for active use. The north end of the African Road Park is likewise a nice natural area with large trees and an extensive patch of trout lilies. It was agreed that we should define the boundaries of these natural areas and note their value. The individual park management plans should designate areas that are to remain undeveloped.

Steve Appel reminded us that Vestal Councilman Steve Milkovich had expressed interest in the CAC's activities and it was agreed that Steve should invite him to attend our next regular meeting to discuss our parks inventory.

We identified Willow Point Park (off Gates Road) and Twin Orchards Parks as the next properties to be toured. Dates and times are to be determined.

Cindy Westerman reported that at the last Environmental Management Council meeting Catherine Aingworth, Superintendent of the Binghamton-Johnson City Joint Sewage Treatment Plant, presented a status report the plant. Owing to the extensive damage to the plant from floods and the legal battles over the collapsed wall, the plant is able to perform only primary waste treatment. Restoration of secondary and tertiary treatment may not occur until 2017.

Members noted that the NYS appellate court recently upheld the right of local municipalities to pass and enforce zoning ordinances that would prohibit natural gas exploration, extraction, and storage within their jurisdictions.