

Conservation Advisory Commission
Minutes of the October 17, 2013 Meeting

Present: Curt Pueschel, Michael Restuccia, Victor Lamoureux, Shep Bennett, Cynthia Stephens-Westerman

Excused: Linda Green, Cole Moore, Steve Appel

Guest: Adam Flint

Minutes of the September 19 meeting had been approved by e-mail. The next regular meeting of the CAC will be on November 21, 2013.

Adam Flint of Cornell Cooperative Extension attended our meeting to gauge interest in possibly bringing the annual statewide conference of the New York State Association of Conservation Commissions and the New York State Association of Environmental Management Councils to Broome County in October of 2014. He was among more than a hundred people who attended this year's meeting earlier this month in Buffalo. The three-day event consisted of an evening reception on the first day, a full day of presentations, and a day of optional tours to local sites relevant to the topic of the conference. The registration fee for individuals was about \$100. The meeting had a variety of sponsors, mainly energy and environmental technology companies and foundations, that presumably made significant contributions to help cover the cost of the conference. Mr. Flint saw the main challenge to bringing the conference to our area as recruiting people to handle the administrative work and the organizational details. The CAC members were supportive of the idea, some expressing regret that they had not been able to attend the Buffalo meeting, and ideas and suggestions were offered.

Following Mr. Flint's departure, we discussed the September 29 CAC tour of Richards Avenue Park, Vestal Center Park, and David Avenue Park. The plan to visit Ross Corners Park was abandoned owing to uncertainty about the park boundaries and the late hour. A more detailed report of the tour will be given at a later meeting. None of the three parks raised significant concerns about changes that would result from the loss of ash or hemlock trees. Some ash were present, but they were in peripheral areas and of modest size. Hemlocks were present only on the northern boundary of Vestal Center Park and there were only a few individuals. Richards and Vestal Center parks already have standing deadwood of other species that is of more immediate concern. The main problem for all three parks is the undercutting of streambanks. The park most at risk to undergo significant adverse change in character is David Avenue Park, and the danger comes from the stream to the north of the park rather than the Choconut.

All CAC members whose terms are due to expire at the end of the year have indicated that they would like to be reappointed. We should redouble our efforts to find a candidate to fill the alternate-member seat that was vacated by Dick Pastore's resignation. Cindy has decided that she can no longer continue as our representative to the Environmental Management Council. We would welcome a volunteer. The EMC meets at 4:30 on Wednesday afternoons. The members present signed their ethics forms.

Victor raised the topic of the DEC Community Forestry Program grant and its possible use to increase plantings in the parks. Bank stabilization and replacement of the ashes in the lawn area of Barlow Park were identified as desirable goals.