

**MINUTES**  
**CHESTER CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (CCAC)**  
**August 22, 2024 – 6:00 PM 3 Romers Alley, Sugar Loaf, NY**

**Attendance**

**In-person:** Martine DiPasquale, Jane Dysinger, EJ Szulwach, Bill Greene, Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn, Tracy Schuh, Deputy Mayor Betty Ann Reilly (Village of Chester Liaison), Langdon Morris, Clifton Patrick, and Leslie Smith

**On-Zoom:** Susannah Devine

**Welcome**

Martine DiPasquale, CCAC Chairperson, opened the meeting at 6:00 PM with Attendance Roll Call/Pledge.

**Approval of Minutes, July 25, 2024**

**Motion:** offered by Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn and seconded by Jane Dysinger  
**7 in favor/0 opposed – MOTION CARRIES**

**Old Business Update and Committee Reports**

- A. **Community Preservation Fund:** Leslie Smith shared additional properties for consideration for the CPF list. Martine DiPasquale received the CPF list. The group discussed that properties could be added if they were considered significant to the town or village. The CPF list is not as restrictive as the requirement of the National Registry. The group discussed that our role would be to prioritize the list, with additional properties added as needed.

**Recommendation:** The CCAC will present the prioritized CPF list to the Town and Village boards.

**Motion:** offered by Jane Dysinger and seconded by Tracy Schuh  
**6 in favor/1 abstention/0 opposed – MOTION CARRIES**

Additionally, it was discussed that the CCAC would assist in the creation of a “one-pager” for circulation to prospective property owners to promote interest in open space preservation to accompany the introductory letter being drafted by the Town Supervisor. Tracy Schuh, Susannah Devine and Betty Ann Reilly volunteered to assist in the one-pager that explains Purchase of Development Rights (PDR).

**Recommendation:** The CCAC will assist in the creation of an informational “one-pager” about PDR to assist in education & public outreach with the CPF.

**Motion:** offered by Bill Greene and seconded by EJ Szulwach  
**7 in favor/0 opposed – MOTION CARRIES**

- B. **Monitoring and Enforcement of Required Tree/wetland Buffers and Landscaping Site Plan:** The problem is that tree and wetland buffers listed in site plans are often not monitored for compliance. There is no structure in place for enforcement after the fact, if specific landscaping or buffers are not included or maintained. Langdon Morris suggested exploring feasibility of a temporary Certificate of Occupancy that would allow for re-inspection at a later date for full compliance of landscaping and buffer zone. Clif Patrick added that all site plan commitments should be revisited for compliance.
- Recommendation:** The CCAC recommends to the Town and Village Boards a requirement related to the commitments made by developers for the monitoring and enforcement of tree and wetland buffers and any other site plan commitments to be subject to approvals with a temporary provision of a Certificate of Occupancy with a two- year inspection that would be paid for through a collected fee from the developer at the time of site plan approval.

**Motion:** offered by Bill Greene and Tracy Schuh  
7 in favor/0 opposed – **MOTION CARRIES**

**NOTE:** One CCAC member left early. The quorum remained intact.

- C. **Coalitions and Roundtables:** The group discussed seeking membership in the New York State Association of Conservation Commissions with attendance for one/two members at the Annual Conference on the Environment (September 18, 2024 – Virtual Speakers and September 19 & 20, 2024 In-person Field Trips).

**Recommendation:** The CCAC recommends that we join the New York State Association of Conservation Commission with the Town covering the \$75.00 membership fee for municipal governments.

**Motion:** offered by Bill Greene and seconded by Jane Dysinger  
6 in favor/0 opposed – **MOTION CARRIES**

**Recommendation:** Additionally, the CCAC recommends that the Town sponsors participation for one or two CCAC members to attend the New York State Annual Conference on the Environment held September 18-20, 2024. The full conference cost is \$80.00/person. However, there is also the option to attend a one day of virtual presentations, at a cost of \$25.00/person. Deputy Mayor Betty Ann Reilly suggested that since it is budget season for the Town, requests are submitted for memberships and conference attendance as part of education requests. Suggest presentation to the Village Trustees.

**Motion:** offered by Tracy Schuh and seconded by Bill Greene  
6 in favor/0 opposed – **MOTION CARRIES**

- D. **Park Land Fees:** The group discussed raising the Town's Park Land fees from \$2000 to \$5000 in accordance with adjacent municipalities.

**Recommendation:** The CCAC recommends an increase in the Town's Park Land Fees to \$5,000.

**Motion:** Offered by Bill Greene and seconded by Tracy Schuh  
6 in favor/0 opposed – **MOTION CARRIES**

- E. **Purple Martin Project Plan:** The Fury Family has purchased the recommended Purple Martin house and it is now ready for installation. Elizabeth reached out to Orange County Audubon for advice on placement. Installation of pole can be this fall, with the House installation in early spring 2025.

**Recommendation:** None

- F. **Knapps View Update:** Jane Dysinger and Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn shared the Knapp's View walk (July 23, 2024) with Soña Mason (Restoration Ecologist), Anne Wibiralske (Orange Environment Ecologist), and CCAC member Susannah Devine. Soña has offered to return in October for a seed gathering day with members and the public. Collected seeds can be stored and spread in the field next spring to encourage native plants. Additionally, Soña pointed out areas where invasives are taking hold and need removal. Elizabeth shared that a fall mowing plan needs to be developed and agreed to by the Town. EJ Szulwach also shared that he has an abundance of milkweed seeds for distribution. Bill Greene brought up the idea of establishing a Knapp's View Conservancy to help the town preserve and protect the area.

## New Business

- A. Pop-up Repair Cafe:** Jane Dysinger shared the planning for the Pop-Up Repair Café event at the Chester Senior Center. The date will be November 2, 2024 from 9:00 to 1:00 (or 2:00). We are still in need of coaches: two for sewing, two for knife sharpening, and two for electronics. If other areas of expertise are found, i.e., bike repair, computer, or jewelry they are welcomed. September 20, 2024 will be check in date in order to be sure the event can take place. Clif Patrick volunteered for electrical repair. Tracy Schuh, Bill Green, EJ Szulwach, and Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn volunteered to help out during the event. Elizabeth will create an information table for the CCAC to share some of our initiatives and accomplishments. Susannah Devine will develop a flyer to circulate through the Town and Village to promote the event. Tracy Schuh will draft a pamphlet that explains the CAC for a handout at event.  
**Recommendation:** None
- B. Climate Smart Community:** We do not have a CSC coordinator since Grayson Sussman Squires left the group. We need to consider if we want to continue as a Climate Smart Community. Bill Greene suggested that we discuss with Town Supervisor Brandon Holdridge what his goals are in reducing the Town's emissions and reducing our collective carbon footprint. We may need to look beyond the CCAC for CSC interest and support. Recruitment is needed.  
**Recommendation:** None
- C. Scheduled Presenters:** The CCAC discussed how and when to bring in speakers, i.e., DEC for technical assistance and grant opportunities with comprehensive plan review, open space and natural resource inventory work. We will consider Zoom (virtual) meetings for speakers. Recorded sessions and/or transcriptions could be made available to the public. Tracy Schuh will follow up with a prospective speaker for availability in September.  
**Recommendation:** None
- D. Other business:** EJ Szulwach suggested that the CCAC officially ask for a budget to help with tree plantings and advertising events. He also would like to know what the Town's plans are for solar, especially on the Town Hall, as this would affect the decisions for planting trees around the building. Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn will forward our previous budget request to Martine DiPasquale as a starting point.  
**Recommendation:** Consensus that a member of the CCAC should attend budget meetings.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Motion:** offered by EJ Szulwach and seconded by Jane Dysinger  
5 in favor/0 opposed - **MOTION CARRIES**

## Next Meeting:

Thursday, September 26, 2024, 6 PM, 3 Romers Alley, Sugar Loaf, NY