

MINUTES
CHESTER CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
July 25, 2024 – 6:00 PM 3 Romers Alley, Sugar Loaf, NY

Attendance

In-person: Martine DiPasquale, Jane Dysinger, EJ Szulwach, Susannah Devine, Bill Greene, Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn, Deputy Mayor Betty Ann Reilly (Village of Chester Liaison), Langdon Morris, Town Supervisor Brandon Holdridge, Clifton Patrick, and Leslie Smith

On-Zoom: Grayson Sussman Squires, Tracy Schuh, Justin George

Unable to Connect: Helen Flavin

Welcome

Martine DiPasquale, CAC Chairperson, opened the meeting at 6:02 PM with an Attendance/Roll Call. All members, liaisons, and community members introduced themselves. Moving forward, our meetings will be guided by the new Town Meeting Guidelines.

Old Business Update and Committee Reports

- A. **EV Charging Stations:** Grayson Sussman Squires shared his report for EV Charging Station Pricing currently located at the Chester Senior Center and Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center. He offered background information, comparable pricing (public and private), and recommended that the fee remain at 35 cents per kilowatt hour for both sites. There was a group discussion about incentivizing for those who leave their vehicle “plugged in” and who would be responsible for enforcement. This may be something to consider as usage increases and if a courtesy issue occurs at the Charging Stations. Report attached.

Recommendation: The CAC recommends that the Town maintain the current 35 cent/kW hour rate for the Charging Stations.

Motion: offered by Bill Greene and seconded by Jane Dysinger
8 in favor/0 opposed/1 abstention - **MOTION CARRIES**

- B. **GHG Inventory:** Grayson provided an overview of greenhouse gases and their impact on the atmosphere, explaining CO2 equivalent measures. The town emitted 360 Kg of CO2 or 360 tons, with major energy consumers being transportation, heating, and electricity. The council discussed suggestions for reducing CO2 emissions. Report attached.

Recommendation: The CAC recommends that the GHG report is accepted and shared with the Town Board with the following suggestions:

- a. Consider electrifying the fleet as vehicles age-out with a transition to natural gas and/or electricity using variable cost analysis. Grants are available.
- b. Conduct an energy efficiency audit throughout the Town facilities.
- c. Share information about current Town efforts to reduce CO2, i.e., turning off lights when not in use and installing motion sensors in Town buildings.
- d. Consider solar options for Town facilities.
- e. Compare our GHG with other similarly sized towns. Susannah will review the Climate Smart website for applicable comparisons.

Motion: offered by EJ Szulwach and seconded by Susannah Devine
9 in favor/ 0 opposed - **MOTION CARRIES**

- C. **Resignation of Grayson Sussman Squires:** Grayson announced his resignation from the CAC and his role as Climate Smart Coordinator. He will complete the EV and GHG reports and be available for technical questions. The CAC thanked Grayson and wished him well.
Recommendation: None

- D. **Tree Commission Proposal:** Bill Greene spoke about the proposal and presentation to the Town Board on 7/23/24, which was enthusiastically received. It was further discussed that Bill present at the next Village Board meeting -scheduled for August 12, 2024. Deputy Mayor Betty Ann Reilly supported the idea of joint Tree Commission serving both the Town and Village. Town Supervisor Holdridge will send Bill's proposal to the Village to prepare for Bill's presentation.
Proposal attached.
Recommendation: None

- E. **Park Land Fees:** Town Supervisor Holdridge discussed the Park Land Fees suggesting an increase from \$2,000 to \$5,000. The CAC and Comprehensive Planning Board were asked to submit formal recommendations for the increase. Potential funding could upgrade to LED lights at Chester Commons. Supervisor Holdridge will charge the Town's interns to research and compare with other local communities. Tracy Schuh has a spreadsheet for comparison and will share with Town Supervisor Holdridge.
Recommendation: None

- F. **Purple Martin Project Plan:** Tracy has found a donor for the purchase of the Purple Martin House and will coordinate with Susannah Devine on the purchase. Elizabeth Barrett-Zahn will reach out to Audubon or Mearns birding groups for placement advice.
Recommendation: None

NOTE: One CAC member left early. The quorum remained intact.

- G. **Pop-up Repair Café:** Susannah Devine and Jane Dysinger shared their ideas for bringing Repair Cafes to Chester with an initial Pop-up version. All members of the CAC were tasked with identifying potential coaches especially those with knife sharpening, electronic, and sewing expertise. Susannah and Jane will finalize details before presenting to the Town Board for approval.
Recommendation: A formalized action plan will be presented to the CAC during the August meeting
Motion: offered by Susannah Devine and seconded by Jane Dysinger
8 in favor/0 opposed - **MOTION CARRIES**

- H. **Village Water Station at Black Meadow:** A brief discussion occurred about the Water Station. Martine DiPasquale will follow up with Gary Green and Tom Becker for a report at the next meeting.
Recommendation: Tabled

- I. **1414 Kings Highway Update:** Tracy Schuh and Jane Dysinger offered a detailed, full report and discussion of the Planning Board public hearing on July 17, 2024 focusing on the 1414 Kings Highway development project. The report will be finalized and submitted to the Planning Board by the deadline. The CAC seeks guidance on developing a productive relationship with the Planning Board.
Report attached.

Recommendation: The CAC accepts the 1414 Kings Highway report (with edits) to be submitted to the Planning Board by July 27, 2024.

Motion: offered by Bill Greene and seconded by EJ S Szulwach
8 in favor/0 opposed - **MOTION CARRIES**

New Business

A. **CFP Recommendations:** The list has been reduced to 21 properties. Leslie Smith inquired if historic buildings were included. Chairperson DiPasquale confirmed they were not but could be added. Leslie will create a list of historic buildings.

Recommendation: Tabled

B. Knapps View Walk:

Recommendation: Tabled

C. Other Items- Tabled

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: offered by EJ Szulwach and seconded by Martine DiPasquale
8 in favor/0 opposed - **MOTION CARRIES**

Next Meeting:

Thursday, August 22, 2024, 6 PM, 3 Romers Alley, Sugar Loaf, NY