

Town of Lansing Conservation Advisory Council

Minutes of meeting 6-1-23: 6:30 pm via Zoom

In Attendance: Carrie A. Koplinka-Loehr, Edward Dubovi, David Wolfe, Gabrielle Desnoes, Ruth Groff (Lansing Town Board liaison)

Absent: Todd Walter, Karen Edelstein, Robin Bailey, John Fleming, Adam Buck;

Bergmann Associates: Katie Darcy and John Steinmetz

Presentation: How the Non-Pipes Alternatives Program relates to Lansing

Agnes Guillo, Community Educator, Cornell Cooperative Extension, gave a presentation on the NPA for the southern portion of the Town of Lansing. Since 2015, there has been a moratorium on new natural gas service in the Lansing area due to a failure to secure approval of a new natural gas pipeline to the area. The NPA program was initiated to try and reduce demand for natural gas in the target area. A major part of the initiative is the potential for enhanced rebates on the installation of “heat pump” technology for homeowners now on natural gas service. Free home energy audits are available through Earth Sensitive Solutions to assess the feasibility of switching to geothermal or atmospheric heat pumps. The town is divided into three zones with different rebate options. The key factor is the energy audit as each home presents different challenges to utilize the rebate program. Questions on the program should be directed to CCETC.

Open Space Index Update: Katie Darcy, John Steinmetz; Bergmann Associates

Questions were raised at the last CAC meeting as to the validity of using the viewshed data in the ranking of properties for the OSI. The issue was that the data were not derived from a systematic assessment of all areas of the Town. Katie divided the OSI rankings into three categories – low, medium, and high. This permitted an assessment of whether the viewshed data had a significant impact on the rankings of the parcels. As it turned out, only two parcels moved from the high to middle ranking when the viewshed data was excluded. Interestingly, these two parcels are already under easements. Viewshed data will be available if and when parcels in the high category are being assessed for easement considerations. With this issue settled, Bergmann will move to constructing the narrative for the OSI. The timeframe for the rough draft was proposed to be two weeks before the August CAC meeting so that CAC members could review the document before the August meeting. A “story map” will be developed following the draft of the narrative with a proposed availability timeframe of Sept/Oct. With draft products available, a public meeting will be scheduled to review the products and entertain comments on the acceptability of the OSI products. Timeframe for this will be late Oct/Nov.

Work Plan for the CAC

The initial workplan for the CAC was examined to determine which items needed to be updated and what changes might be necessary as to priorities. A number of the items are dependent upon actions of the Town Board such a consideration of the Scenic Byway Overlay District and the redesignation of the CAC to become a conservation board. With the completion of the OSI, conservation board consideration is the logical next step. There may be

an opportunity to consult on efforts to establish new Environment Protection Overlay Districts during zoning reviews.

Miscellaneous

- Carrie introduced the issue of starting the recruitment of new council members earlier than in previous years – Dec. This would give us a better opportunity to recruit interested individuals. She will present this issue to the Town Board.
- Robyn will give a 10 min talk on “birds” to the NYSACC in September.
- There were no items presented from various committee reps.