

April Minutes – Danby Conservation Advisory Council

April 23, 2012

Present: Joel Gagnon (member), Tom Gavin (member), Dan Klein (member), Mary Woodsen (guest), Jake Brenner (member), Ronda Roaring (guest)

Change to the March minutes: Dan does not necessarily believe taxpayers should not (in all cases) have to pay conservation easement creation costs. Wishes to explore all options for funding. The Town Board would have to approve anyway.

March minutes unanimously approved.

A check revealed that the January minutes have yet to be approved. Action was deferred so we can all take a look at them.

Jake was authorized to represent the CAC in a Memorandum of Agreement with the Finger Lakes Trail Conference regarding access to and use of the Finger Lakes Trail map data. These data will become part of the Open Space Inventory.

Ithaca shade tree advisory group moving toward a big tree inventory—could inform our work toward a Town of Danby inventory. Perhaps introduce the Danby big tree project via the Danby Area News, but after the Ithaca group gets its work underway and we have a clearer plan.

Interesting property introduced by Ronda as prospective easement. Mary will begin a conversation with owner regarding hopes for the land.

Who pays for what - policy statement – for what purpose? To clarify for Danby landowners that the Town will not be able to pay all easement costs—albeit modest. This would not be text in the easement itself.

- All easements are negotiations—it's important to remain flexible in payments.
- It needs to be made clear to landowners that under normal circumstances [XYZ] are the costs that are customarily paid by landowners; the CAC may take measures to minimize these costs, but they are not automatically covered by the Town.
- Unanimously passed.

Record keeping – we can't meet in members homes; our conversations—by email as well—are part of the public record. What about field work and CE negotiations—is ALL CAC work subject to Open Meetings Law? Even Executive Sessions need to be publicized. Because we are a small body (albeit public), with practicality as a primary concern, and because we need to maintain privacy of our negotiations with landowners, there is a need to discuss the matter of reconciling public business and landowner privacy with Bob Freeman (New York State authority on Open Meetings Law). Dan agreed to contact Freeman and report back to us.

Who will succeed Mary Ann to coordinate education and outreach? Should we disaggregate education from outreach?

We support a focused education program to elevate awareness of the CAC and its conservation easement purpose—much of which will follow from having actually implemented easements. Perhaps regular hikes on easement lands? Perhaps link with Town's Deputron Hollow and our work there? Try a Green Lands Tour to complement the Green Homes Tour. Tom volunteered to be point person. Will return (May) to the brochure and website.

Membership expansion: Joel approached someone. Dan invited Mary Woodsen. Mary served a few years ago on the Danby Comprehensive Plan Implementation Task Force, and is a founding trustee of Greensprings Natural Cemetery Preserve, was editor for the Finger Lakes Land Trust newsletter, today is board member for the Green Burial Council, a group with a strong conservation mission. Dan moved to recommend to the Board to appoint Mary to the CAC. Whose position? Julie Kulik's - ending December 31, 2012. Tom seconded. Unanimously approved.

July's meeting will be changed from the 25th to the 30th.

Next meeting May 28 730pm.

Jake Brenner, Secretary pro tem