

Athens Conservation Advisory Council meeting minutes
July 21, 2022
Athens Firehouse

Members present: Bunting, Grilli, Lipsman, Roth, Winslow (departed at 7:40)

Members excused: Little, Moree

Members absent: Proper

Meeting guests present: Stephanie Facchine and Haley Gallo, NYS DOH, with Lindsey Drew, NYS DEC, Angelo Schembari, CGL Arbor Services, Jesenia Laureano, Hudson River Estuary Program/DEC (by telephone)

Chairman Lipsman convened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

1. Welcome and introductions – participants introduced themselves.
2. Agenda review and approval – the agenda was approved by assent, with the addition of item #6 regarding tree #80.
3. Approval of minutes of last meeting – the minutes of the meeting of June 16, 2022, were approved by assent.
4. Drinking Water Source Protection project – the handout was sent to members in advance. There was discussion of “protection” methods, which generally are methods to address non-point sources of pollution. These include consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, zoning, intermunicipal agreements (all regulatory methods). Also discussed were non-regulatory methods, and outreach and education. At our next meeting, we will discuss “management” methods, which are more point source-based. The group agreed that we are now getting into the heart of our project with identification of methods, to be followed by implementation plans.
5. Tree Inventory and Management Plan – Mr. Schembari reported that more than 75% of the trees have been inventoried and about 60% of available planting sites have been identified – there may end up being 100-200 of these. He said there will again (as in 2018) likely be a dozen or so trees identified as recommended for removal. He estimated that the inventory and management plan should be finished by September, or October at the latest.

Mr. Schembari said he was impressed with community progress with trees since the original inventory in 2018, including tree removal, tree replacement and tree management. He gave tips for applying for DEC Urban Forestry grant money, assuming application information will come out later this year. He invited members to submit questions in advance of his next visit with the group, to allow him to prepare responses.

6. Tree #80 – the tree had been recommended by DPW for removal, was inspected by Mr. Schembari and CAC members and was voted 4-0 for removal, Bunting motion, SECOND Roth.
7. Climate Summary – Jesenia Laureano had forwarded a number of handouts that were sent in advance to CAC members. The meeting was close to the end time and there was inadequate time to discuss the handouts fully. Ms. Laureano explained that the purpose of the “Climate Summary”

document is to be a reference for the Village's work around responding to climate change, with all relevant information compiled in one place. She said the most important part is the Opportunities list of on page 16.

Ms. Laureano offered to help the CAC with identifying alternatives to the Climate-adaptive Design Studio program, for which the Village has unsuccessfully applied twice in the past.

She said that a natural next step is a "Vulnerability Assessment," that she can help with.

The group did not have time to discuss the Case Study folder Ms. Laureano sent, nor the Sea Level Rise maps, nor the funding opportunities resource sheet.

The group felt that due to the comprehensiveness of the materials and the overlap with the work of the Waterfront Advisory Committee, that it made sense to invite the new WAC chair, Andrea Smallwood, to a meeting to discuss how our groups could work together using these resources, and others, including [Flood Resilience Handbook for Hudson River Public Access Sites](#), that the group has been intending to review as well.

8. Tree Law – there was insufficient time to discuss the Tree Law. Dr. Lipsman said he had met with Mr. Bradicich regarding the latter's thoughts on the law. Mr. Bradicich was unable to attend this evening's meeting due to an unanticipated work obligation. The group thought it made sense to request the Village Board not to consider the Tree Law until we have had a chance to include Mr. Bradicich in the conversation. Dr. Lipsman will request the Board delay consideration another month.
9. Arbor Day observance – placeholder item for planning this event that needs to happen if the Village wishes to obtain Tree City USA status again for 2022.
10. Member items – there were none.
11. Agenda for meeting of August 18, 2022 – there was discussion about trying to limit the number of guests and topics per meeting, to allow enough time for conversation and consideration.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Joshua Lipsman, MD