

Athens Conservation Advisory Council meeting minutes

April 16, 2026

Via Zoom

Members present: Bradicich, Reed, Brunner

Members absent: Sprague, Braine, Moree

Meeting guests present: Christine Vanderlan (NY DEC)

Chairman Bradicich convened the meeting at 6:37pm.

Habitat Mapping – Christine Vanderlan (NY DEC) attended meeting to discuss the work plan for the project. Susan Pepe will be our contact at the Hudson River Estuary Program for the financial reporting. Mr. Bradicich asked for her contact information. Ms. Vanderlan will ask Ms. Pepe to copy Mr. Bradicich on future communications. Discussion on quarterly reporting, Mr. Bradicich will ask Mayor Serrago if she will be submitting the report or if he will be sending it. Ms. Vanderlan said he could prepare the report but it would probably need to be signed by the mayor. Next was a discussion on our goals for the project, how we would use the habitat maps and who else might use the maps. Ms. Reed spoke about taking classes with Hudsonia where similar mapping projects for other municipalities were discussed and being impressed with it. Also there are a number of large undeveloped properties in the village and her experience with one of them potentially being developed led to questions about what was on the property. Ms. Reed thought the maps would be helpful for the village during a SEQRA process. The property around Hollister lake was included to be helpful with the Drinking Water Source Protection Project. Mr. Bradicich mentioned the project would be helpful for the Comprehensive Plan and Waterfront Revitalization Plan. Also discussed waterfront zoning changes and that this project will strengthen positions on what we want our waterfront to be. Mr. Brunner asked if the project was just covering the village and Hollister lake. Ms. Reed said it was just those areas but should provide a lot of detail. Discussion on Greene County Natural Resources Inventory(GCNRI) and how this builds on that project.

Ms. Vanderlan went over her role in the project, reviewing quarterly reports, providing assistance with presentations and possibly participating in the proposed workshop for municipal officials. Mr. Bradicich asked if the GCNRI would be updated with our habitat mapping. Ms. Vanderlan said the Greene Land Trust is the organization that created it and that we would need to talk with them about a possible update. Discussion on the story map we are creating and if it could be included there as well. Ms. Vanderlan shared her screen with the group and went over her expectations for a quarterly report and report forms to use. Any meetings, public presentations and workshops reported should have good details on what was covered. At the end of a quarter we have 30 days to submit the report for that quarter and our first report will be due in July. Ms. Vanderlan believes we will have plenty of time to finish the project by the contract expiration date of June 30, 2027. Discussion on dates published on available work plan and getting access to the latest version. Mr. Bradicich asked for more detail on Ms. Vanderlan's role in the project. Ms. Vanderlan discussed her role in other projects but believes this one to be straightforward. She said the place for her to contribute would be mostly for the public presentations and workshop for government officials. Discussion on being a member of the steering committee and if that is what the CAC wants from her. Mr. Bradicich wants to talk to Hudsonia first before making any decision. Discussion on steering committee mentioned in the work plan and if there should be a separate committee meeting or to plan on including in regular CAC meetings. Mr.

Bradicich believes we should have a side committee to interact with groups mentioned in the work plan.

March meeting minutes – Mr. Bradicich believed that having three out of five members present was a quorum to vote. All in favor vote to accept the minutes.

Drinking Water Source Protection Project – Mr. Bradicich has reached out to Ms. Bement and the village attorney to schedule a meeting to get the recommended laws into the right format for presentation to the Town of Coxsackie and Town of Athens. The town boards will put the laws out for a public hearing that Mr. Bradicich and Ms. Bement will attend. The expectation is that the laws will be approved as previous presentations went well. Our next CAC meeting will be in person at the Community Center to get the mailers done for watershed residents.

Tree Grant RFP – RFPs went out to newspapers and should be on the village website. Mr. Bradicich mentioned not having an invasive species list but was able to come up with a list of 34 trees for the removal list. Ms. Reed said she sent an email this morning with the information. Discussion on where it would be located on the CAC Google drive. RFP proposals are now due June 1st. Mayor Serrago wants us to review submissions and score them as well as make any recommendations. Mr. Bradicich believes we will need to schedule a meeting soon after the deadline to keep the process moving. Ms. Reed mentioned that we need to be able to answer any vendor questions before the June deadline. The plan is to do that at our regular May meeting on May 21st. Discussion on next meeting in early June and the plan is to have that meeting on June 4th at 6:30pm to judge proposals. Mr. Brunner asked if we have enough people to do this or do we need to find a new member quickly. Mr. Bradicich mentioned he has reached out to someone who was interested in joining but that if all five members are at the meeting it should be good enough.

Complete Streets – Mr. Bradicich researched this since the last meeting as a beneficial program for points in Climate Smart Communities. It should tie in with the tree grant and NY Forward grant project on Second Street down to the waterfront. Discussed preservation of bluestone sidewalks and working with the DPW to correct gaps in the sidewalks. There is a draft policy and implementation timeline in the CAC folder for the group to review.

Mr. Bradicich asked CAC members to take on other projects for Climate Smart Communities. Ms. Reed and Mr. Braine will work on Habitat Mapping. Mr. Bradicich will talk to Ms. Moree about a project dealing with the waterfront and her intention to talk to Andrea Smallwood from the LWRP. Mr. Brunner offered to look at the first two items on the list of projects.

Community Day – Ms. Reed talked about having the Village Board declare Community Day as the Arbor Day celebration for Tree City USA recognition. Mr. Bradicich suggested having the Village Board take care of it at the next meeting. Ms. Reed wants to make a spreadsheet to track CAC work on the tree canopy that will help with reapplying for the Tree City USA recognition.

Mr. Bradicich asked Mr. Brunner to look into Planting for Resilience for Climate Smart Communities points as it ties in with the tree grant and gets points for something we are already doing.

Discussion on May in person meeting and work plan for that meeting. Mr. Brunner asked about Nancy Poylo email requesting we look at the tree in front of her home that is slated for removal. Mr. Bradicich has marked that tree “on hold” on the removal list so the tree can be evaluated once it leafs out.

Mr. Brunner asked about when are we going to make plans for Community Day and if it will be similar to last year. Discussion on what was done last year and a possible meetup to discuss further or talk about at the next meeting.

Motion to end the meeting made by Ms. Reed, seconded by Mr. Brunner, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 7:26pm.