

Broome County Environmental Management Council

Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive



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Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC) Notes from the meeting held Thursday, January 6, 2011 United Way Building, Jenson Road, Vestal, NY

Present:

Members-at-Large: André LaClair, Tony Lubzanski, Julia Hoover, Chris Burger, Erin Heard, Karen Ciatyk, and Bill Heaviside

CAC Reps: Cindy Westerman (Vestal)

Ex-Officio Reps: Frank Evangelisti, BC Planning

Staff: Beth Egitto, BC Planning

1. The meeting was **convened at 7:05 pm.**

2. **Privilege of the Floor/Announcements/Member Items of Interest**

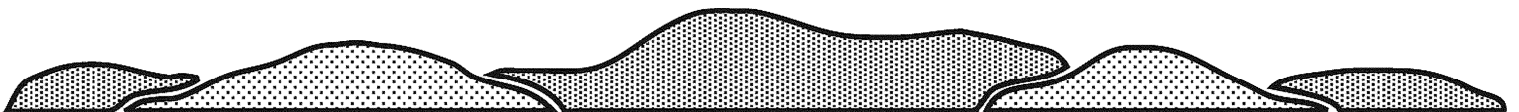
- Beth Egitto, staff member with the Department of Planning and Economic Development and former Environmental Analyst for the EMC introduced herself. She will now be providing the staff support to the EMC. She expressed that she is looking forward to working with the EMC again.
- Frank Evangelisti noted that the Planning Department will be holding a municipal training at the Broome County Office Building Thursday, February 10th on the subject of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). A notice will be forwarded to EMC members when it is finalized.

3. **Committees**

- There was a discussion about the status of the standing committees.
- As of 2011, the Planning Department no longer has a contract with the Division of Solid Waste Management. In recent years, Planning staff time that was allocated to facilitating and organizing Recycling and Waste Management Committee meetings was funded through this contract. In the absence of this contract, staff would like to know if and how members would like to proceed with this committee. There was interest in continuing with the RWMC, noting that the inception of this committee was independent and not part of the contract. Members feel that it would be beneficial to keep this committee going as a forum for public input for solid waste issues. Beth will consult with the Division of Solid Waste to express these concerns and report back to the Committee Chair.
- In regard to the Natural Resources Committee, members feel that this committee should continue with a focus on the Open Space Plan. There was discussion about changing the format of the plan to be discussed under Work Plan Items.
- Members stated a desire to form additional committees only on a temporary, task-oriented basis. However, members see the value in maintaining the two standing committees since the issues they address are ongoing.

4. **Ideas for Speakers and Trainings**

- It was suggested that the group attempt to host speakers that have a high level of renown in the environmental field at least one to two times per year. This speaker could be heavily advertised and would advertise the EMC and attract potential members. Perhaps this could be an event separate from the normal business meeting. All concurred that this was a good idea.
- Frank mentioned that he was approached by Ken Kamlet, a local attorney and former EMC member, about speaking on the topic of a grant proposal by EIT and Huron to carry out a proposed pilot demonstration project to establish the technical and economic basis for a process to treat and recover shale gas hydro-fracture wastewater. The proposal builds on an engineering feasibility study to develop a water supply and wastewater recycle center using EIT's industrial water treatment facility located at



the Huron Campus in Endicott. Frank circulated a summary of the project provided by Ken. Everyone was very interested in hearing about this. Beth and Frank will contact Ken to set up a date.

- Karen was interested in hearing from members of the Livable Communities Alliance, a collaborative of diverse professionals, organizations and concerned citizens created to preserve and enhance the quality of life and natural resources of rural and urban communities while strengthening the regional economy. Beth mentioned that Tarik Abdelazim from City of Binghamton Planning has expressed a desire to speak with the EMC. She will contact him to set up a date.
- Most expressed a desire to advertise the meetings more widely, through press releases and/or TV ads in an effort to encourage membership and participation. However, all agreed that the number of speakers at business meetings should be limited to 5 or 6 per year, so not to impede the group from conducting business.

5. Work Plan Items

- Overall, the group expressed a desire for increased communication regarding the needs of County government and individual departments in order to assess where the Council can provide assistance. There were several of ideas suggested about how to do this including, producing useful tools that will bring the legislative and department leaders to the table and outreach to individuals and organizations in order to find out ways to work together. Frank suggested that one area where EMC assistance may be needed is at the municipal level where towns and villages need technical assistance related to environmental topics.
- Overall, everyone agreed that the development of some key products and tools will provide examples of the work that can be done by the EMC and help to foster relationships with other organizations and legislative bodies.
- There was some concern that addressing certain issues might conflict with the opinions of other groups that the EMC would like to partner with and prohibit cooperative partnerships. It was suggested that in choosing the appropriate language and communication throughout the process of investigating issues, this can be avoided.
- Since the Open Space Plan has been in production for several years, the timing may not be right to complete a plan that will be adopted. However, there is a lot of information that has been collected and a lot of work that has been done thus far. Therefore, planning staff has suggested that instead, the information be packaged as a Natural Resources Inventory. This will serve as a tool for municipal departments, legislators, and the public. Most concur that this will be a good approach but this will be discussed further at the next Natural Resources Committee on January 20th.
- Julia brought up the issue of blighted buildings, specifically one near her home in Endicott. Frank indicated that it is difficult to address buildings that have private ownership and are current in their taxes. Other buildings that have been seized by the County are easier to deal with. The group agreed that the EMC is not equipped to deal with that type of issue at this time.
- Both the JKLS Photo Show and Competition and the Riverbank Clean-Up will continue to be held. There was a suggestion that the Chamber of Commerce may be interested in partnering with the EMC on the Photo Show as promoting tourism in the County. Chris will contact the Chamber to see if they would be interested in advertising the competition and providing a judge to help choose photos from a tourism perspective.

6. Calendar - A draft 2011 Meeting and Events Calendar was circulated. Bill moved and Julia seconded that it be approved the calendar as written. All in favor. Motion passed.

7. Survey of Planning/Training Needs for Municipal Boards - Beth distributed a survey that was drafted by Planning Department staff. The survey lists several basic planning and environmental planning topics that may be of interest to municipal planning and zoning boards. The survey will be distributed to them in an effort to assess their technical assistance needs and identify ways that the

planning department and the EMC can assist them. Members should look over the survey and forward any suggestions for additional topics to the planning department.

8. The meeting adjourned at **9:05 pm**. **Next meeting:** Thurs., February 3 @ 6:00pm, Broome County Public Library, Binghamton.