



# TOWN OF COLONIE

347 OLD NISKAYUNA ROAD

LATHAM, N.Y. 12110



## **Town of Colonie Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Minutes – August 3, 2017**

Members Present: Ellen Rosano, Laura Weed, Michael Brennan, Don Allard, Corinne Steinmuller

Discussion kicked off with ensuring scheduling for Bulletin Board, Planning Board, and CAC meeting minutes. Laura Weed gave review of previous Planning Board meeting. Siena Heights development approved. Discussion of tree preservation and natural corridor encouragement. Burning brought up as required for residential/commercial properties vs. Residential/residential properties.

It was noted to not be a contentious meeting as the developer has done much outreach. Mike Brennan brought up the recurrence of referring to Maxwell Road and clearcutting. Ramic Redevelopment was not present and was pushed to a future board meeting.

Laura Weed changed the bulletin boards to a new theme – ‘science behind climate change’ This brought discussion on impacts to migrating birds, in particular.

### **Plan Review**

2069 Central Avenue

- Rosetti project: Proposed commercial and storage building (no tenant has been identified)
- Vacant “sheds” (former homes) identified on property, near Empire State Stone
- Dead tree identified to be removed, but a large grove of maples is present at the rear of the property that is recommended to stay. Wetland are adjacent, but not identified on site.
- Project narrative is sparse and does not match SEQR documentation. Don Allard says that an aquifer is present on site, not identified in the documentation. Developer states that storm water management won’t change or impact wetlands. No landscape plan was given or building purpose.

### **CAC Outings**

#### **Siena Invasive**

Members Ellen Rosano and Don Allard attended the invasive species program at Siena College.

Don: Topics included impacts to natural resources and agriculture, a panel discussion packed with information. Wild parsnip and giant hogweed discussed for their immediate harmful physical impacts. Invasive species removal discussed including specific tools and methods of applying herbicide direct to rhizomes.

Member Mike Brennan brought up prevalence of water chestnut in the Mohawk River and how it has been harvested off of Rosendale Road. Both milfoil and water chestnut have clogged up the boat launch at the Town Park. Laura also brought up the prevalence of invasive on a small scale in private homeowner’s ponds.

Don brought up the positive fact that the public are much more aware of invasive species as compared to a decade ago. Much discussion was had on the efficacy of biological control.

Cornell has bred an insect species to assist in control of the Hemlock Woody Adelaide and are very confident that it will be effective.

New invasive insects are constantly showing up, including certain drosophila species.

Discussion continued to the use of Map invasive and local trainings on using the program.

A highlight is discussion of the need for native plantings to keep pollinators happy.

### **Saratoga Tree Nursery**

Members Ellen Rosano, Don Allard, and Mike Brennan visited the tree nursery for a tour with the director.

Mike: The director lives on site. The property impressive growth with large buildings and equipment. Much is utilized for state lands. A lot of the work is seasonally based and this was the “off-season”. February – May were identified as the busy season, with ongoing seed extraction and planting. Many seeds require elaborate process: pines often require shaking and heating. Seeds are then placed in massive glass jars.

Laura questioned whether they have formed a “seed bank” as the one in Norway. The scale is not to those standards, however, and the seeds are not preserved for such a manner.

Ellen brought up how the plants you buy in home improvement stores may be the same species but are not acclimatized as they are grown elsewhere.

The appreciation for short-span trees such as birch was emphasized for their role in succession.

The nursery is filled with all NY seedlings and propagation occurs on site. The term “natives” has been changing as the zone creep continues.

### **Comprehensive Plan**

Member Laura Weed reported on the Comprehensive Plan meeting.

Discussion was had regarding the update to the GEIS for the Airport, to be completed after January 2018.

A committee was discussed for the Lincoln Avenue BOA.

Results of the Siena Survey were reported. The executive summary stated that most residents are happy in Colonie.

The largest complaints were in regards to traffic and rapid development.

A business round table is slated to occur September 13th and 14th at The Crossings.

Ellen Rosano brought up the idea of changing the need for parking and requiring a smaller amount of spaces in exchange for green space, particularly as online shopping has seen a boon.

Laura reported that the only major changes were to add more detail, remove riverfront discussion, and remove details about the Town Identity.

There was discussion on need for new sidewalks and improvements to Parks and the Library. Comments are due by August 31st for the next meeting in September.

Shared services with adjacent municipalities were discussed as has been encouraged by NYS through grant proposals.

**Tree City USA**

Ideas were discussed to maintain status as a Tree City USA for the upcoming year, with programs such as Trees for Tribes and Urban Tree Design mentioned. Councilmembers agreed to research possible ideas for the next meeting.

Member Don Allard moved to adjourn. Chairperson Ellen Rosano seconded.