

# Broome County Environmental Management Council

Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive • Stacy Merola, Director



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**Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC)  
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE (NRC)  
Minutes from July 17, 2008  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor Exhibit Room, BC Library, 184 Court St, Binghamton, NY**

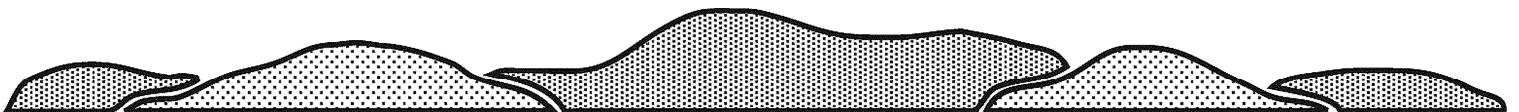
**Present:** Karen Ciatyk, Bill Heaviside, Mary Cronk, Julia Hoover, Stacy Merola, and Cindy Westerman.  
**AWE:** Erin Heard, Andre LaClair, and Beth Egitto.

Karen called the meeting to order at **4:09pm**.

1. Julia moved, Bill seconded, to approve June minutes as written. Motion carried.

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

- Circulated Millennium Pipeline Summer 2008 newsletter and two maps from their website: [www.millenniumpipeline.com](http://www.millenniumpipeline.com). Discussion ensued.
- Bill reported that he's noticed NYSDEC removing trees and growth from levees. Discussion ensued.
- The Binghamton Regional Sustainability Coalition's potluck & meeting July 24, BC Library, 6:00-7:45 pm.
- Circulated June 2008 IBM Groundwater Remediation newsletter and notice of DEC's issued Record of Decision (ROD) for the Hidden Valley Electronics site (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/37550.html>).
- Shared several State Environmental Notice Bulletin (ENB) items that were posted July 2: a) Endicott Interconnect Technologies applied to renew their Article 19 Title V air facility permit for five years, which also includes a request for approval to use toluene in their coating processes. b) A power house supplies steam to the Huron Campus; the power house will be removed from the EIT permit and incorporated in to a separate Title V permit to be issued to Huron Real Estate Associates in a separate action. c) A recycling operation previously identified in the EIT permit will be incorporated into a separate state facility permit for IBM to reflect a change in who owns, operates and controls asset recovery devices.
- Julia found information about a compressed air hybrid vehicle- made in Europe- that is alleged to get 800 mpg. They emit half the CO<sub>2</sub> of a Toyota Prius. They are expected to hit the Japanese market in 2009. Mary noted that there's a professor at Cornell that uses a similar type of prototype vehicle. Mary also said there's a member-based car share program at Cornell; you are charged per hour to use the fuel efficient vehicles.
- The Planning Dept and EMC received a long Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) from Binghamton University for an Engineering & Science Building planned for the corner of Murray Hill Rd and Vestal Parkway. The Primary function is for flexible research lab with office space; secondary functional spaces will be mechanical labs, small conference spaces and public spaces to foster interdisciplinary collaboration. The project will incorporate sustainable and green building design and is expected to achieve a LEED Gold rating level with the potential for Platinum rating level.
- Stacy received a call from Harriet Russell, who's been on the EMC mailing list for some time. She wondered where EMC got the video presentation on Eco-Home Network that we viewed at the July 07 EMC general meeting. Coincidentally, Harriet is the sibling of Julia Russell, the founder of California's Eco-Home Network. Stacy shared Harriet's contact information with Julia Hoover, who introduced us to the Eco-Home Network concept as Ms Hoover was a resident there a few years ago.
- Karen saw signs at the gate of and throughout Oquaga State Park that reminds park users to be watchful of Canada goose nests and to report sightings to the Park's Manager.
- Karen also circulated a news article about eco-friendly hotels.
- The Vestal CAC drafted a fact sheet about the invasive species, the Emerald Ash Borer. In addition, the CAC also wrote a draft position statement about natural gas drilling in the Town of Vestal. Both documents must be adopted by the CAC; they were circulated for information purposes.



### **3. NYSDEC Proposed Rule Revision – Open Burning**

The St. Lawrence County EMC invited the DEC to speak about their proposal to revise state open burning regulations in June. DEC employees Ed Blackmer, Greg LaBarge, and Tom Morgan told St. Lawrence that the proposal would ban burning of yard waste. However, in their opinion, this may be added to the list of exceptions. DEC also noted that the question of burning ag plastics will be an issue. DEC reported that Cornell Cooperative Extension is developing a pilot program to accept and bale ag plastics. DEC noted that NYS waste regulations (6NYCRR part 360-1.7) are also being reviewed for possible revision in conjunction with this. An analysis of the economic impact of this proposed regulation estimates that an average family of four will spend an additional \$300/year for waste disposal if burning is banned. DEC predicted that the comment deadline would be extended; it is now August 14. DEC stressed that if people have concerns about an educational campaign to accompany the ban, or a request for the state to assist local governments with any added costs associated with the revised regulation, to include those requests I comments sent to DEC.

Bill and Andre have questions to include in a response to the DEC.

### **4. Natural Gas Drilling Updates**

The BC Attorney, Joseph Sluzar will be traveling to Texas to make observations. Deputy County Executive and Interim Public Works Commissioner Patrick Brennan attended the July 15 Natural Gas Drilling meeting at Chenango Town Hall, which was organized for municipal officials. Brennan and Sluzar traveled to Chenango and Steuben Counties to visit active (vertical) natural gas wells. These are not exploratory wells and do not involve fracturing of the Marcellus Shale; they did not observe any questionable situations. Brennan would like to visit an active well in PA.

BC controls roughly 6000 acres of land, some of which is parkland. Mr. Brennan informed me that surface drilling cannot occur on parkland. The County envisions that sales tax revenue will increase because landowners who received royalty payments have already made numerous high-ticket purchases. There is anticipation that revenue could help keep property taxes down if this play proves fruitful. Brennan noted that the County will draft a request for proposal (RFP) for companies interested in drilling on County lands. Mary and Bill suggested that we look to Damascus, NY for similarities with respect to geology and environmental impacts, not necessarily Colorado or Texas.

Julia spoke about gas fires underground in the City of Los Angeles that can't be extinguished. She is concerned about protocol and responses for emergency services. Discussed ensued. Julia offered to contact local disaster preparedness officials for information and positions.

Circulated a basic list of natural gas drilling resources compiled by staff. Members can add to the working list, but many of the resources are cross-listed on other websites. Stacy will email the list to attendees.

### **5. Open Space Plan (OSP)**

Stacy circulated Andre's Section IV A – Recommended Actions for members to review by next meeting. In this portion, Andre outlines overall tools that can be used for open space conservation and protection. Bill circulated a draft of portion of Section IV E. – Recommended Actions for Distinctive Character that includes points for Scenic Landscapes and Byways. Sections remaining include Section III A. Protected Open Spaces (edit), Section III C. Working Landscapes (edit and add), Section III G. Enhancements (outline), and Section IV Recommended Actions for each area of Section III minus County-wide recommended actions and Distinctive Character recommended actions.

**6. Next meeting:** Thurs, September 18, 4 pm, Meeting Room A, BC Health Department, 225 Front St, Binghamton.

The meeting **adjourned at 6:15 pm**

Stacy Merola, Recorder