

Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC)
Notes from the meeting held Thursday, February 2, 2006
United Way Board Room, Jensen Road, Vestal, NY

Present:

Members-at-Large: Terry Woodnorth, Mary Cronk, Tim Wolcott, Bill Heaviside, Ken Kamlet and André LaClair

C.A.C Reps. Cindy Westerman (Vestal)

Special Reps: Chip McElwee (BC Soil & Water)

Ex-Officio: Bob Denz (BCHD)

Legislative Reps: Ron Keibel (11th District)

Staff/Intern: Stacy Merola and Beth Egitto

Associates: Karen Ciatyk and Doug Garner

Visitors: Gary Holmes (Binghamton City Engineer) and Vernon Myers (Shumaker Engineering)

Absent w/excuse: Ruth Levin, Tony Lubzanski, Kevin Mathers and Anndrea Starzak

1. Andre **convened** the meeting at **7:15 pm**. Introductions followed. Minutes from January were approved as written on a motion by Terry seconded by Tim. Motion carried.

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

- BC Soil & Water Conservation District: a) Winter 2006 Conservation Update available; b) Operation Arbor Green Tree & Shrub Sale- 63 species of conservation trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and wildflowers and 8 different variety packs. Order by April 5th, pick-up is April 21. c) District awarded grant to continue hydroseeding services to municipalities at a discounted rate.
- Juliet Berling will talk about Binghamton University's recycling program entitled "Recycling, Why Bother?" at the next meeting of the Sierra Club. Tues, February 21st @ 7:30pm, Central United Methodist Church, Union.
- Chris Burger's annual winter party will be March 4th. Directions were circulated, bring dish to pass.
- The RWMC meeting scheduled for March 27th may be changed to March 20th due to Chair conflict.
- Public Meeting Thurs. February 9th @ 7pm, UEHS, Large Lecture Hall addressing County's environmental investigation at 312 Maple Street in Endicott as part of the NYSDEC's Environmental Restoration Program (ERP) to cleanup and redevelop brownfield sites.

3. Special Presentation: Court Street Gateway Project Design Concepts

Gary Holmes, City of Binghamton Engineer and Vernon Myers, Shumaker Engineering

BMTS's visual preference survey (2003) revealed that the important gateways in the community are Front St., Washington St. and Court St., Binghamton. The first of these projects is the Court Street Gateway (viewed as the most important), which will begin construction in 2007. NYS Dept. of Transportation (DOT) is in charge of improvements east of the Chapman St. intersection, including the Tompkins Street Bridge. Some possibilities for this section include landscape medians and antique lighting. The city will focus on the portion of Court St. between the intersections at Water St. and Chapman St. One significant issue is the configuration of the light at the Exchange, Chenango, and Court intersection. Options include realigning the lanes with a traditional stoplight or construction of a roundabout with no stop light. While roundabouts have a bad reputation in this area because of the JC Circle, they help minimize the severity of accidents by preventing head-on and T-bone collisions. Another significant issue is parking along Court St. Options include keeping parallel parking, traditional angle parking and back-in angle parking (a relatively new concept). In general, alterations include additional landscaping and decorative streetscapes (e.g. antique lighting, banners, plantings). Some significant topics of discussion included addressing buildings that are eyesores, improving access from the highway, landscaping ideas, infrastructure changes and additional conceptual ideas.

4. There was a short break.

5. Committee & Task Force Reports:

• Natural Resource Committee (NRC):

○ ***ACTION ITEM: Letter to Pomeroy Lumber re request for ID of “High Conservation Value” areas in Broome County.*** Sawmill in Nineveh (Town of Colesville), Pomeroy Lumber, Inc./UTC Land Management Group- Want to participate in green certification program through the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and SmartWood®. Identification of High Conservation Value (HCV) areas is part of this certification. Pomeroy would like help identifying HCV areas within Broome County. Stacy prepared a written response, which comes moved and seconded by NRC. There was some discussion about forest management practices for timber harvesting in general. Motion carried.

○ Anne Road Quarry- Bluestone mine, Anne Rd., Town of Windsor. Reviewed staff comments.

• Goose Management Task Force (GMTF): Met January 11 and discussed details of the student report and future steps with Mary Jane Lombardo, an author of the policy analysis. Next meeting: tentatively set for 2/15.

• Recycling & Waste Mgmt Committee (RWMC): Received updates from DSWM about consultant selection for the Landfill expansion SEIS, Colesville landfill cap repairs, and various other updates about the County Landfill. Briefly discussed concerns about recyclables getting mixed with construction and demolition debris (C&D) debris, and prioritized the RWMC section of the 2006 Work Plan (Top 3 priorities: Small business recycling, institutional recycling and the Landfill SEIS).

6. Conservation Advisory Committee/Commission (CAC) Reports:

Vestal- Cindy reported the CAC discussed memberships and appointment (they have two vacancies); generically discussed archaeological sites, the Town’s Master Plan and SEQR training; and revisited the Senior housing project on Rte 26. Next meeting: Feb. 28, 7:30pm, Vestal Town Hall.

Union- No report; Dickinson- No report.

7. Staff & Chair Reports:

• Millennium Pipeline- Stacy attended the open house. Significant changes addressed included decreasing the line from 36” to 30”, abandoning the Lake Erie crossing, and changing a 5.5 mile section of the route in Broome County, among other things. The public was mostly concerned with eminent domain issues. Stacy spoke with Rick Hall, Environmental Project Director for Millennium Project/Columbia Gas Transmission, about the crossings at the Susquehanna River and Bradley Creek. She also requested copies of the map sets for BC. He offered to come speak to the EMC if necessary. The County does not plan to intervene formally in the project. The EMC commented previously on this issue in 1997. Feedback will be accepted until February 10th for those who wish to comment.

• EMC’s nominations for 2006 membership appointments are on the agenda for the Legislature’s Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting on February 7th.

• Guest speakers for coming months: No March speaker. Staff has communicated with a NYSDEC contact regarding chronic wasting disease and Barbara Fiala’s office; however nothing concrete has been set up. Other suggestions included an update on the status of the river trails and the Greater Binghamton Coalition executive director, Jim Dimascio, or BU’s Public Archaeology Facility director, Nina Versaggi.

• Paul Swartz from Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) contacted Legislator Keibel asking for support in requesting members of NYS Congressional delegation to support fiscal year (2007) funding (\$4.3 million) to allow completion of the US Army Corps of Engineers’ Whitney Point Lake Modification Project project. A resolution will go before the legislature this month regarding this issue. The County can expect to see improvements to Dorchester Park (new bathrooms, boat launch and water system improvements). Ron will share info with Stacy.

8. The meeting adjourned at **9:20 pm**

Beth Egitto, Recorder; Stacy Merola, Editor