

Broome County Environmental Management Council

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



Broome County Office Building • 44 Hawley Street • P.O. Box 1766 • Binghamton, New York 13902
(607) 778-2116 • Fax (607) 778-6051 • Website: www.gobroomecounty.com

Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC) Notes from the meeting and Membership Open House held Thursday, March 1, 2007 Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County, 840 Upper Front Street, Binghamton, NY

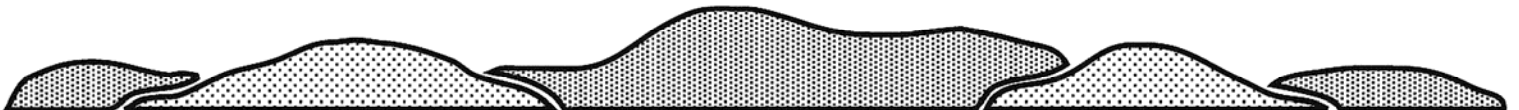
Present:

Members-at-Large: André LaClair, Mary Cronk, Bill Heaviside, Karen Ciatyk and Tony Lubzanski
Student Reps: Melanie Feltmate (BU)
CAC Reps: Cindy Westerman (Vestal)
Special Reps: Chip McElwee (BCSWCD), Kevin Mathers (CCE BC)
Legislative Reps: Tim Cleary (District 2)
Staff/Intern: Stacy Merola, Beth Egitto and Christina Prete
Associate Members: Anndrea Starzak, Duke Holdsworth
Visitors: Jacob Thompson, Virginia Payne, Alfred Wagner, James Little, Mark Bacon, Erin Heard, Josephine Chu, Helena Garan, Allen Brown, Mitch Sosnicki, William Ewing, Art Jamison, Pat Jamison, Adam Jamison, Trina Cooney, Alana Cooney, Scott Lauffer, Dylan Horvath and Kevin Bowman

Absent with Excuse: Terry Woodnorth, Ron Keibel, and Doug Garner

1. Following introductions, André **convened** the meeting at **7:14 pm**. Minutes from February were approved on a motion by Bill, seconded by Mary, with the following amendments: in the second section, bullet 5, “skinning” was changed to “skiing”; in section three, “only about 8% of all protected wetlands in NYS” was taken out of the minutes, and in the committee reports Chip made clarification that he will be attending the March CAC meeting, not February. [Editors Note: Karen Ciatyk should be listed as absent with excuse for the February 1st minutes.]
2. **Privilege of the Floor /Member Items of Interest/Announcements**
 - Stacy promoted the 2007 Joyce K. L. Smith Environmental Photography Show and Competition, a showcase of Broome County’s environment covering: Wildlife, Plantlife, Natural Landscape, Cultural Landscape, and People in Action. The deadline to submit photos is Wednesday, March 7 and the opening reception will be held May 9. The Guidelines are online at www.gobroomecounty.com.
 - Earth Fest, a local Earth Day celebration, will be held at the BCC Ice Center April 28, one week after Earth Day. In addition to environmental information and activities from local organizations, there will be tree sales and free giveaways.
 - Melanie reported that many Binghamton University students will be supporting Kick Coke Off Campus, a campaign to remove all Coca-Cola products from campus in efforts to help the company’s workers in Columbia. BU just signed a two year contract with Coke so students are going to need a lot of support to accomplish the task. For more information visit www.killercoke.org.
 - Binghamton University will be hosting an Earth Day event Thursday, April 19 from 11am-3pm. If you would like a table let Melanie know.
3. **Membership Open House - “What Exactly is an EMC?”**

The Broome County EMC is a citizen advisory board to county government on local environmental issues. A division of the Planning Department, the EMC was established by the BC Legislature in 1971 by the authority of article 47, NYS Environmental Conservation Law. The BC EMC is one of about 24 EMCs in New York State. The EMC is composed of several voting members (Members-at-Large, Special Reps, Conservation Advisory Commission reps and student reps) as well as non-voting members (associate members and ex-officio reps from County departments). Currently the EMC is looking for 9 members at large, and 2 student representatives, 1 from BCC and 1 from High school. EMC members advise County government and the public (through resolutions, plans, comment initiatives, etc.), plan and conduct environmental education and research, prepare long-term plans covering a variety of environmental areas and work with a variety of other organizations and government entities.



There are currently two standing committees: the Natural Resources Committee addresses topics such as open space planning, energy issues, air quality issues, wetland conservation and protection, and stormwater management; and Recycling and Waste Management Committee activities include landfill CAC support and environmental impact statement review, reduce, reuse and recycle outreach, America/NY Recycles Day and illegal dumping. The EMC is considering the formation of an Environmental Awards Committee to develop an awards program to recognize local businesses, institutions and residents that employ environmentally friendly practices. There have also been a variety of ad-hoc committees over time, such as the Brownfields Committee and Goose Management Task Force. The EMC also organizes or participates in special events such as the JKLS Environmental Photography Show and Competition, Riverbank Clean-Up, Book Recycling Fair, NY Recycles Campaign, and NYS Association of EMC's Annual Conference on the Environment. A packet containing the bylaws, work plan and other informational materials was distributed to visitors and interested citizens. More information about the Broome County EMC can be found at www.gobroomecounty.com/emc.

4. The council had a short recess to mingle with visitors.

5. Committee Reports

Natural Resource Committee (NRC) – The NRC did not meet last month due to inclement weather. One of the topics scheduled for discussion was the pre-proposal draft of New York's rule to implement the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) in the State. Several members felt that the issue should be brought to the full Council prior to the comment deadline on March 13.

RGGI is a flexible, market-based cap-and-trade program to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants in the Northeast. Seven states including New York have agreed to participate in the program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. RGGI requires 25% of the emissions allotted to be auctioned off. NYS's rule proposes to auction off 100% of the allowance with the funds allotted to energy efficiency projects in the state, something that has never been done before. This method makes polluters fully accountable for their carbon emissions and creates an environment where the largest polluters bear the largest burden of cost. Beth wrote a draft letter to the DEC Climate Change Office in support of the goals set forth in the draft proposal and the 100% auction, which was edited by André. The drafts also acknowledge that more details are needed regarding the auction's mechanism and other sources of carbon should continue to be addressed. Both drafts and a presentation given by Jeremy Magliaro, former Environmental Analyst, were circulated.

ACTION ITEM: Melanie made a motion to approve Beth's draft with Andre's addition and send it to the DEC. The motion was seconded by Cindy. All in favor, motion carried.

Recycling & Waste Management Committee (RWMC) – The committee did not meet this month. The next meeting will be Monday, March 26th.

6. Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC) Reports

Vestal - Cindy reported that the CAC met Tuesday, February 27. They discussed flooding in creeks and found Chips stream books extremely helpful. Chip will be talking about streams at the next meeting, Tuesday, March 27th.

7. Staff and Chair Reports

- Stacy reported that Legislative reps, Ron Keibel and Tim Clear were appointed by the Chair of the Legislature for two year terms.

8. Next meeting: Thursday, April 5th at 7 pm, United Way Board Room, Vestal.

The meeting adjourned at **9:30 pm**.

Christina Prete, recorder
Stacy Merola and Beth Egitto, editors