

Broome County Environmental Management Council

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



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Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC) Notes from the meeting held Thursday, September 6, 2007 United Way Board Room, Jensen Road, Vestal, NY

Present:

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

CAC Reps: Cindy Westerman (Vestal)

Student Reps: Josephine Chu (BU)

Staff/Intern: Stacy Merola and Beth Egitto

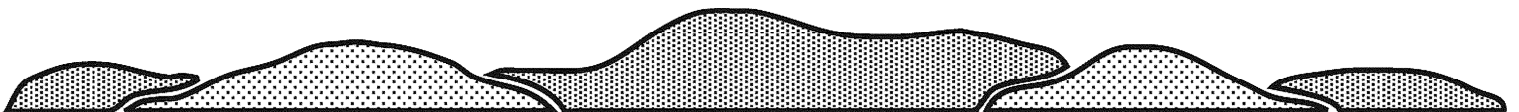
Visitors/Guests: Ken Holmes, Mark Bowers, Scott Reigle, Chris Petraske and Amy Parker

Absent with Excuse: Doug Garnar, Terry Woodnorth, Ron Keibel, André LaClair, Kevin Mathers, and Bob Denz

1. Following introductions, Bill **convened** the meeting at **7:05 pm**. Mary moved to approve the minutes from June as written (held over due to lack of quorum in July). The motion was seconded by Chris and approved by all. Chris moved to approve the minutes from July as written. The motion was seconded by Mary and approved by all.

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

- Circulated volunteer sign-up sheet for EMC events. The Book Recycling Fair is Sept. 13-15 and 21&22; volunteers work 3-hour shifts. Riverbank Cleanup that will be held October 6 from 9-noon. The EMC team will again clean William "Billy" Hill Park, a Town of Union park in Johnson City.
- NY Upstate Chapter's American Planning Association (APA) annual conference, "The Art of Planning" is Wednesday, Sept 19 - Friday, Sept 21 @ Binghamton Regency Hotel, Water St., Binghamton. Registration for non-APA members is \$195 full conf, \$110 one-day (Thurs), \$60 half day (Wed or Fri), and \$25 full conference for students; register by August 31.
- NYS Assoc of EMCs and NYS Assoc of Conservation Commission's annual Conference on the Environment, "Plugging Into Tomorrow" is Friday, Oct 19 – Sunday, Oct 21 @ Proctors Conference Center, State St, Schenectady, NY. Registration is \$90, \$35 for students; register by September 19.
- The BC Division of Solid Waste Management (DSWM) has Earth Machine compost bins available for \$36 plus tax at the BC Landfill. Call 778-2250 for more details.
- NYS DEC sent letters to notify residents that they will be conducting a preliminary environmental assessment in North Endicott and Endwell throughout September as part of a larger effort to locate soil vapor contamination and sources in the Endicott area. Soil gas and groundwater samples will be collected in the area generally bound by the Susquehanna River on the south, Twist Run Rd. on the north, Prescott Ave. to the west and Country Club Rd. to the east. Another letter indicated that the DEC will collect groundwater samples in the area bound by Nanticoke Creek to the north and west, Maple and Union St. to the south and Nanticoke and Liberty Ave. to the east.
- Cindy mentioned that the Sierra Club is working to include Binghamton in the COOL Cities initiative. These are cities that have made a commitment to stopping global warming by signing the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, a pledge to reduce global warming pollution by 7% below 1990 levels by the year 2012. The Sierra Club is also looking into the possibility of COOL Counties and COOL Towns. She will bring the issue back to the EMC when she has more details.



3. Greater Binghamton Greenway and Trail System

Scott Reigle, Sr. Transportation Planner for the Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study (BMTS), and Mark Bowers, Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator for the NYS Department of Transportation (DOT), gave an overview of existing and proposed Greenway segments and an update of new developments. A greenway is a linear park that connects people and places with many benefits such as preserving green space, recreation and alternative transportation. The 1999 Binghamton Greenways Study laid the groundwork for the multi-county trail system. According to the implementation plan, key pieces of the system would be developed and then more segments built to make connections. Using aerial photos, Scott and Mark, took the group on a tour through the various segments which are in varying phases of development, several of which currently have funding and are in the design phase. Some of these include, a Route 434 trail (funded and under design); a trail segment from Clubhouse Road to Binghamton University (under design); a trail from the BC bus garage to Commerce Rd (concept only); Phase 2 of the Vestal Rail Trail to Castle Gardens (under design); Phase 3 Vestal Rail Trail to Tioga Co. line (funded); and Tracy Creek to Route 17 Apalachin boat launch (concept only). Three other segments in Tioga Co. (Apalachin to East Marshland Rd to West Marshland Rd) need studies and funding. Mark predicted that those that are funded will be completed within the next couple of years and the whole greenway system could feasibly be completed within 5 to 10 years. A question and answer period followed.

4. The EMC discussed an item early that is listed on the agenda under Staff and Chairs Reports because some members had to leave after the presentation. **Letter regarding a proposed Johnson City Wal-Mart.** Beth distributed a draft letter requesting that Wal-Mart consider incorporating green technologies, specifically Low Impact Development (LID) strategies, into the site design of the proposed Wal-Mart on Lester Avenue in Johnson City. The letter also requests that the Village of Johnson City work with Wal-Mart and their contractors to integrate LID into the site design. The letter acknowledges that the proposal to build on a former brownfield is a commendable action. However, besides this feature, the site lacks any unique or innovative site characteristics from an environmental standpoint. The letter outlines the potential benefits to Wal-Mart, the Village and Johnson City residents if LID strategies and other green technologies were utilized in the site design. Chris mentioned that a statement should be included regarding potential traffic impacts. Cindy agreed and also felt that a comment regarding stormwater management for surrounding areas should be included. **ACTION ITEM:** Mary moved and Chris seconded to send the letter with these modifications to the JC Planning Board Chair, signed by the EMC Chair. In addition staff comments will be submitted to Rita Petkash, Planning Commissioner, as part of the 239 development review process.

5. Committee Reports:

Natural Resources Committee (NRC) - Met Thurs., July 19. Topics of discussion included the proposed Johnson City Wal-Mart site plan and a recent meeting addressing local flooding issues. The meeting mainly focused on the Open Space Plan, specifically the Enhancements section, maps and potential recommendations. **Next NRC meeting:** Thurs., October 18, 4:30pm, BCOB.

Recycling & Waste Management Committee (RWMC) – The committee did not meet in July due to scheduling conflicts. Consultants completed the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) for the entrance to the section IV of the BC Landfill. The FSEIS goes to the Public Works Committee of the BC Legislature, and before they render a decision on the action agencies and the public will have 10 days to consider the FSEIS before the written findings statement is issued. The FSEIS is should address all substantive issues brought forth in the DSEIS and comments made thereon. **Next RWMC meeting:** Mon., Oct 22, 4:30pm, BCOB.

Membership Committee - Membership nominations were approved by the Legislature for Julia Hoover, Chris Burger, Erin Heard, Cindy Westerman and Josephine Chu. EMC received a membership application from an interested resident, Tom Byers.

6. Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC) Reports:

Vestal – The CAC completed almost all of the sections for their stream management recommendations. A Town Board member, will attend the September meeting to discuss them. Some recommendations will require changes in the Town Code. **Next meeting:** Tuesday, Sept. 29, 7:30pm, Vestal Town Hall.

7. Staff & Chair Reports:

- EMC staff, EMC members and other County representatives were invited to meet with the staff from the NYS Attorney General’s office and Ms. Katherine Kennedy, NYSAG Special Counsel on the Environment office on Sept 6. Topics discussed included Vapor Intrusion/TCE issues, the NY Regional Interconnect Power Line proposal, brownfields and outdoor wood boilers, among others topics. The Office of the NYS Attorney General is holding forums across the state to gather input and feedback from state residents.
- A report on the historic Chenango Canal is available in the Planning Department. The report includes several GIS maps showing the route of the former canal overlaid onto current aerial photographs.
- Beth attended a renewable energy seminar in Candor hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tioga County. The seminar provided details about installing a solar power system in your home including equipment and financing. Perhaps this is a type of seminar the EMC would like to sponsor in the future.

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

Next meeting: Thurs., October 4 @ 7pm, Chenango Town Hall, Route 12 in the Town Chenango.

Beth Egitto, Recorder;
Stacy Merola, Contributor and editor