



State of New York County of Broome Government Offices

Environmental Management Council

Jason T. Garnar, County Executive · Larry Lepak, Chair

**Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC)
Notes from meeting held Thursday, July 11th, 2019 at 5:30pm
Decker Room, Broome County Library
185 Court Street, Binghamton, NY**

Present:

MAL: Ian Jensen, Bill Heaviside, Dylan Horvath, Jo Render, Tony Lubzanski, Chris Burger, Larry Lepak

CAC Reps: Adam Flint (Vestal)

Leg Reps: Bob Weslar

ExOfficio: Frank Evangelisti, Director of Planning

Staff: Beth Lucas, Senior Planner

Others: George Bezama, Terry Woodworth, David Ballard, Allison Twang, Michael Bennett, Julian Shepherd, K. Shirley Cothran, Steven Bard, Andy Reistetter, Megan Wise, Allen Hochberg, Aswad Shabazz, Steve Scobie, John Snidev, Jeff Bohner, Matt White

1. The meeting was **convened at 5:30pm.**
2. **Presentation: Broome County Comprehensive Plan Update, Frank Evangelisti, Director, Broome County Planning and Economic Development**

Broome County adopted the current Comprehensive Plan in 2013. The Department of Planning and Economic Development is currently undergoing an update of the Plan to assess progress over the last 5 years and update the recommended actions for achieving the nine vision items established for the community. Frank Evangelisti, Director, gave a presentation giving an overview of the purpose of the plan, planning process identified environmental issues addressed in the plan, and the vision established during the previous planning process.

The Planning Department then solicited feedback from attendees. Questions included the following:

- What environmental priorities should we focus on? Some of the suggestions included rural water, wastewater treatment, endangered habitats, green energy, local foods, and overall water quality.
- What actions can the County take to address these? Move forward Climate Smart Communities actions, improve communication about environmental issues/progress, plan for siting of solar and wind projects, document effectiveness of recycling efforts, enhance organic waste management, enhance energy education and outreach, enhance clean energy and other sustainable practices at county facilities, enhance public transportation (routes and timing) especially for low income areas, enhance wifi.

Additional feedback can be given though the Comprehensive Plan survey currently available at <https://broomeplan2020.questionpro.com>.

[Type here]

3. Announcements/ Privilege of the Floor/Items of Interest

- The Town of Sanford recently passed moratorium on wind-turbine development. Calpine has proposed development of a large-scale wind project in Sanford and is going through the application process. The moratorium was passed for a period of three months. It is uncertain how the moratorium will impact the approval process lead by the Public Service Commission.
- Chris Burger noted that 2020 is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Earth Day Southern Tier, the partnership that hosts the annual Earth Fest at SUNY Broome is looking for ways to celebrate this milestone at the event in April. The group discussed ideas. One was to center the theme of the Joyce KL Smith Environmental Photography Competition around the anniversary (the show will open the first weekend of May, just after Earth Day). There may be an opportunity to feature the competition entries as part of Earth Fest.
- Tier Energy Network (TEN) will be meeting on July 17th at the Huron Campus.
- The Climate Solutions Summit is being held at SUNY New Paltz on September 21st <http://climatesolutionssummit.org/>

4. Administrative Items

- Membership Application – George Bezama (resume sent to voting members)
 - o George gave an overview of his background and interest in the EMC.
 - o **ACTION ITEM:** Chris made a motion to appoint George to the EMC filling one of the vacant Member-at-large seats. Seconded by Adam. All in favor, motion passed.
 - o George will serve in one of these seats in an acting capacity until the membership appointments at the turn of the year, when he can be nominated for a full membership term.

5. Support Letters

- Waterman Center Parking Area Green Infrastructure
 - o Waterman Conservation and Education Center requested support from the EMC for their grant application to construct a new sustainable parking area that integrates green infrastructure components, along with enhancements to their educational program to highlight these sustainable design features.
 - o Beth drafted a support letter based on a model letter sent from Waterman.
 - o **ACTION ITEM:** Chris Burger made a motion to approve the letter and offer the EMC's support of the project. Seconded by Adam. Dylan Horvath recused himself from the vote, as he sits on the board at Waterman. All in favor, motion passed.
- Town of Union Argonne Avenue Recreational Trails
 - o The Town of Union requested support from the EMC for their grant application to construct walking trails in an area of several flood buyout properties in the Argonne Avenue area.
 - o Beth drafted a support letter based on a model letter sent from the Town.
 - o **ACTION ITEM:** Chris Burger made a motion to approve the letter and offer the EMC's support of the project. Seconded by Adam. All in favor, motion passed.

[Type here]

6. **Climate Smart Communities and Clean Energy Communities**

- The Broome County EMC has been officially designated as the Broome County Climate Smart Communities Task Force via an Executive Order. The CSC Task Force serves as a central body of leadership that promotes and supports the local government to accomplish plans, programs, and activities that are part of the Climate Smart Communities Certification program.
- CSC Pledge – The Climate Smart Communities Pledge was passed by the Legislature in June. This was the last step necessary in order to be eligible for application for Climate Smart Communities certification.
- CSC Certification – An application was submitted to the NYSDEC for Broome County to be a bronze certified Climate Smart Community. With all submitted documentation, we have requested a total of 215 points (120 points are required for bronze certification). The County should find out if the application was approved by late summer.
- Grants
 - o Clean Energy Communities – After being designated as a Clean Energy Community in Spring of 2019, Broome County became eligible for a \$150,000 grant to further Clean Energy efforts in the County. At the end of June, the County submitted a proposal for the grant to upgrade lighting at the Broome County Office Building and Family Court Annex from fluorescent to LED light fixtures. The proposal also included installation of a canopy with a flexible solar PV panel as part of the Government Plaza Green Infrastructure project (presented to EMC at the May meeting).
 - o Climate Smart Communities – Broome County Planning and Public Works have prioritized three projects for which we will seek funding under the Climate Smart Communities grant program (due at the end of July). Planning is working with Facilities on a grant to replace cooling systems at several County facilities with more efficient, leak-proof systems. Engineering plans to submit two projects: one will look to install wireless monitoring systems on the County flood-control structures, enhancing our early warning capabilities and improving efficiency of services; the other is a project to improve drainage in the Village of Deposit, mitigating repetitive flooding in that area.

7. **CAC and Committee Updates**

- **Vestal CAC** – The CAC addressed questions surrounding the spraying of Japanese Knotweed on the levee along Choconut Creek. Larry indicated that the DEC may do this to minimize damage to the levee that may result from knotweed infestation.
- **Fenton CAC** – Not present
- **Photo Show Committee** – A meeting will be scheduled in the fall to begin planning for the Show in May 2020.

8. Meeting is **adjourned at 7:45pm**. Next meeting will be held on Thursday September 12th at 5:30pm in the Decker Room at the Broome County Library. Debra Smith, Director of Solid Waste Management will give updates regarding waste management issues in the County.