**Town of Knox Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Notes 7:30 PM June 16, 2022**

Attending: Eric Marczak, Nelson Kent, Amy Pokorny and Peter Farquharson. Brigitte and Shawn McAuliffe did not attend due to illness.

Housekeeping

* Eric recommends we take the online Conservation and Land Use 101 training at

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/120539.html> (Webinars will resume in September 2022.)

This site has a list of webinar transcripts and recordings that are available any time.

* Draft notes from the meetings of March 19 and April 21, as well as for May 19 will be considered for approval at the July 21 meeting.
* Eric’s nephew might have useful information about how we can organize resource data we will be gathering.

Education and Outreach

* Eric will invite Thom Engel to the next CAC meeting. Peter will also see him on July 21. Areas of interest:
  + Characteristics of karst geology in Knox
  + Caves
  + Effects of hydrofracking water wells
  + Collecting water samples from local caves
  + Maps of underground water flows in Knox
  + Changes Thom has observed over time
* We will compose a report for the town board about work we are doing and would like to do.
* We’ll consider composing
  + a piece for the next newsletter (likely in September)
  + a piece for the Enterprise.
  + a calendar with photographs of local sites of interest

Project ideas

* **Prepare an Open Space Inventory** (of both public and privately owned land)
  + Peter provided a list of some possible focus areas to include
    - Grants may be available for professional help
    - NGO and government agencies may also offer help
  + Need to prepare an index of maps
    - Nelson will look at the mapping resources DEC offers
    - Gather all digital maps for Knox– Amy will ask Betty Ketcham what she has
  + Glenville’s website can be a useful reference for us. <https://www.townofglenville.org/open-space-committee>
    - Glenville has prepared an inventory of trees.
      * We could consider problem trees that put utility and communications lines at risk.
* **Restore the wetlands boardwalk** forsafe access
  + Councilman Dennis Cyr has indicated he would like to be involved in restoring the boardwalk.
    - Dennis has had some preliminary discussions with NYS DEC about constructing a parking area from Street Road to the duck house to accommodate a few cars and/or a school bus.
    - Dennis has a friend at DEC who has offered to help as a volunteer.
  + Nelson met with Mark Hohengasser at the boardwalk to assess its structural integrity.
    - Mark thinks the structure is sound.
    - Mark has offered to help in any way he can.
    - Nelson shared a Wetland Trail Design and Construction document that Mark provided.
    - We will consider the feasibility of making a dry (shale?) trail from the kiosk to the boardwalk (over 120 feet).
      * Consider also making it wheelchair accessible. We’ll need to get ADA rules.
  + The kiosk needs to be repaired and information needs to be posted on it.
    - Eric began compiling a list of plants he was able to identify from the boardwalk area.
  + Peter offered to ask his contacts about protections for wetlands.
  + Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy may be able to provide interpretive work, signs, advice, other resources even though they don’t own the wetland.
* Eric is looking at whether some of the wetlands areas can be **classified as sedge meadow**, (>50% of the area has >20 cm. depth of peat). [www.nysacc.org/index.php/nys-cacs-cbs/](http://www.nysacc.org/index.php/nys-cacs-cbs/)
  + Nelson has a drone that might be helpful for making this determination.
* Study the prevalence of **toxins in Knox**
  + Local use of road salt and its effects
    - Amy will ask Matt Schanz what they use and what their history is of its use.
    - Regulations for use of salt, other road treatments
  + Inventory of pesticides, herbicides that are currently in use, estimate amount per year
  + Investigate derelict properties, old barns, outbuildings – potential for storage of DDT, other toxins

Other Discussion

* Completion of SEQR documents by planning board, town board, others needs to be accurate and thorough.

The meeting adjourned at about 8:50 PM