

Attending: Eric Marczak, Nelson Kent, Amy Lauterbach and Dave Nelson.

Eric opened the meeting at 7:36 PM.

Housekeeping

- Nelson made a motion to approve the February meeting minutes. Dave seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- Amy will ask Traci to update the CAC web page to replace Peter's name with Dave's and to update our meeting dates to the second Tuesday of the month.

Education and Outreach

- We would like to have a separate page on the town website for information about the wetland. We'll make a request to the town board.
- Amy will draft a piece for the newsletter about the event Dave organized in February.

Map Library (for Open Space Inventory)

- We want to compile a digital library of maps for all of the town's boards and officials to access.
- Eric had trouble accessing the Albany County Mapping Service's maps so Nelson will try on his PC.
- We also want to add to the collection of 11" x 17" printed maps Betty has already provided. One of the maps she has offered to make for us is of forested areas in Knox. The 11" x 17" format is easily available.
 - She also offered to make an 11" x 17" transparent map with property boundaries to use as an overlay with the other color maps we have.
- Betty has asked Laura DeGaetano for an updated map of the Albany County Agricultural Districts (from data gathered in 2022 or 2023).
 - We will share that map with Gary Kleppel of the Agricultural Advisory Committee.
 - Laura DeGaetano has plans to retire from Albany County this summer.

Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs)

Wetlands Boardwalk Restoration Project

- Dave has arranged for Tristan Lowery to conduct a bird walk at the wetland on May 4 at 10 AM. We will ask Russ to invite local dignitaries (Susan Lewis, Dan McCoy, Jeff Perlee, Chris Tague, Paul Tonko, ...) and have a ribbon cutting for the plank walkway and for the solar array also on Street Road.
 - We'll need a PA system.
 - We'll need a porta potty at the lower end of the town park.
- Dave drafted language for the kiosk.
 - Eric has plans to reinforce the panel in the kiosk to support a registration box.
 - Some materials are available that will hold up to UV light and weather for 5-7 years. The south side of the kiosk where much of our interpretive information will be posted is vulnerable to that kind of exposure.
- We'll need to draft some interpretive material for the solar array.
- We'll draft an article for the Enterprise.
- Dave will send paperwork to the New York Birding Trail to nominate our wetland as a site for them to include.
- We have access to a number of bluebird nesting boxes that we can install at the wetland near the kiosk and also in the north end of the town park.

Other Discussion

- Deb Barnes spoke about a \$50,000 ARPA grant that Jeff Perlee is working on with Historic Altamont and others to preserve a greenway between the growing suburban development around Altamont and the village.
 - Mark King of Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy, the Altamont Fair folks, the New York/New Jersey Trail Conference and others are communicating about their visions to try to map out a route for a trail between the village of Altamont and Thacher Park to connect with the Long Path at High Point.
 - One vision is to build a kiosk and pavilion in the village with information about local trails and preserves to encourage tourism. We would like to have the Knox Wetland boardwalk included in this network.
 - Local parcels of land are in consideration for acquisition or conservation easements to build corridors between existing preserves.
 - The Altamont Fairgrounds would allow overnight camping.
 - Albany County has software that could be used to make a story map of the trail system.
 - This group also plans to reach out to Altamont landowner/developers Jeff Thomas and Troy Miller.
 - An informational meeting is planned for 6:45 PM on Tuesday, March 26 at the Altamont Reformed Church on Lincoln Ave.
 - Deb is working on a website for Historic Altamont that will have more information about this project.
- Patrick Barnes, Assistant Commissioner of NYS DOT recommended we advocate for upgraded equipment for spreading salt and sand on town roads to help reduce the amount of salt needed.
 - Modern computerized equipment can calibrate the amount released according to conditions/need.
 - Funding may be available from NYS.
 - In some conditions, slightly wetting the salt can keep it from bouncing off the road and rolling into ditches or being blown aside by traffic.
 - Tanks carrying brine can pre-wet roads before snowfalls to let the salt evaporate and stay on the surface. As salt dissolves, it breaks the bond between the road and the snow.
 - Sand provides traction. 90/10 mixture of sand to salt keeps the sand from freezing. 50/50 is less economical as it takes more trips to apply and it uses more salt. Sand alone may be adequate for most town roads.
 - Cornell Road School and Snow University (to manage winter storms and protect the environment) offers guidance to local highway departments.
 - The Town of Hague in the Adirondacks has experience managing road maintenance with minimal salt.
- Eric made acquaintance with John O'Pezio, who could be a helpful resource for big game wildlife, and Bruce Nelson, who is a wood worker and hydrogeologist.

At 9:12 PM, Amy made a motion to adjourn, Dave seconded and all approved.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is planned for 7:30 PM on Tuesday, April 16.