

Town of Vestal CAC Minutes
December 15, 2011 Meeting

Conservation Advisory Commission
Minutes of the December 15, 2011 Meeting

Present: Curt Pueschel, Cynthia Stephens/Westerman, Michael Restuccia, Linda Green, Victor Lamoureux

Guest: Cole Moore

Minutes of the November 17, 2011 meeting were previously approved by e-mail. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on January 19, 2012 in the Town Board room.

The meeting was held at the Vestal Public Library so that new members could become acquainted with the CAC's collection of documents stored there. A list of holdings was distributed by e-mail before the meeting. Linda volunteered to organize the files and update the catalog of documents as members deposit recent minutes and other documents.

Cole has applied for appointment to the remaining open post for an alternate member, and Curt has sent an e-mail endorsing the appointment and recommending that it be for one year to maintain the staggering of terms.

Curt reported that he had contacted Ken Hull, a Binghamton resident and amateur naturalist, who had drawn the attention of experts to the high species richness of the unusual fern *Botrychium* in Jones Park. In addition to the five species, including the endangered species *Botrychium oneidense*, identified during a workshop last summer, specimens were sent to other experts to determine whether additional species might be represented in the park. Ken offered to show us the location of *Botrychium* in Jones Park when the fronds emerge next summer. The CAC should map and monitor the locations of the endangered species, *B. oneidense*.

The CAC was reminded of the possibility of applying for a DEC urban forestry grant, which could provide funds for doing an inventory of streetside trees and some tree planting. The competition last winter had a deadline too soon for the CAC to produce a proposal, and no call for proposals had yet been posted on the DEC website. Victor and Cole were interested in contributing to this effort and Curt will forward web links. Ruth Lewis, the town grant writer, could aid in these efforts once we develop an outline of a proposal. Although the emerald ash borer has not yet been reported in Broome County, it soon will be, and the effects will be visible two or three years after the infestation begins. A tree inventory will reveal how many trees on right-of-ways will be lost. It was suggested that Gary Campo be contacted about integration of the inventory with the GIS system. Binghamton and Endicott have done at least partial tree inventories and we might learn about the methods they used.

The possibility of producing a document that would provide the Town Board with a year-end CAC report and recommendations was discussed. Curt will begin to draw together a draft.

Victor will continue to work on a document dealing with concerns about the effects of natural gas drilling in Vestal. The Commission agreed that the Town may be unprepared for the potential negative consequences of drilling and that the Town Board should be actively researching how to best prevent negative consequences in the Town before drilling starts.

Cindy reported that the Broome County Natural Resource Committee of the Environmental Management Council will have an open-space plan completed within a year. She also noted that

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the Upper Susquehanna Coalition has received \$920,000 in funding from New York State for wetlands restoration and the reconnecting of streams with floodplains as part of flood mitigation.