

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REPORT TO TOWN BOARD

February 26, 2024

The CAC has spent most of our time and resources to address the Proposed Amendment to the Ridgeline Protection Code. Our final report was submitted on February 12 at the Town Board meeting, along with our Slide Show summary of our findings and recommendations. Those full reports were presented to be viewed on the Town website. As a partner to the Town Board, we appreciate the opportunity to be of assistance. We hope that the large number of attendees benefitted from the presentation and accompanying discussions.

Given the importance and impact of removing the present wording which protects the integrity of the Ridgeline, we are confident that the Board members will fully read our report and use the comments and resources already gathered for any updated wording of the code. The public is also urged to read the report in its entirety.

Of our 6 recommendations, the first was accomplished by separating and reintroducing the two Code 155 amendments. Here are the remaining recommendations concerning the Ridgeline:

- ***In regard to the Ridgeline Protection Code, The Board should discard the present amendment as worded and create an improved, non-ambiguous code with the guidance of our Town Engineer, Town Attorney(s), and qualified professionals.***
- ***The wording should follow the intent of the CMP.***
- ***The code should include clear definitions for ridgeline, treeline, structure, buffers, and point of measurement.***
- ***Qualifying and/or quantifying language for enforcement standards should be included.***
- ***Consider neighboring communities' ridgeline protection laws for specificity and language within our own code.***

In regard to the proposed amendment, Section 155-31 (K), which the CAC did not focus on, the UCPB suggested changes that would give more discretion to our Town Planning Board in extending project completion dates. We would agree with their suggestion from a land conservation viewpoint. We support the premise that disturbed land created by any development should be stabilized as soon as possible but question if a total of 7 years might give rise to abandoned projects if the economy of the time makes development unaffordable for the developer. Unfinished projects can be an eyesore and devalue properties, affecting our tax base. And, unbuilt properties could pose environmental consequences such as drainage problems or undue strain on Town infrastructures.

We have made progress in additional areas as well. . We have been invited to tour the Cornell Cooperative Extension Agritech Lab and will be scheduling that. Our Spring project will be a Zoom meeting open to the public on the topic of Composting. We have scheduled that for Tuesday, March 26 at 6 PM. The presentation will be in person at the Marlboro Library and also offered virtually. Look for announcements on our Facebook page.

We are also hoping that the Board will consider the placement of a collection receptacle to collect aluminum can tabs in the lobby of the police department, as well as a can of some sort for recyclable cans and bottles. One of our members uses the money made from recycling the aluminum to benefit the Shriners' van service and the can and bottle money supports the local food banks. This is one way the CAC would like to encourage recycling and still help our citizens in need. Any collecting receptacles would need your approval before placement.

The Cohort meetings will resume this month. In the meantime we are hoping to get the Greenhouse Gas Inventory completed with the help of a new volunteer. Our last Cohort meeting was very instructive on how to complete the paperwork for it.

Respectfully submitted,

Mici Simonofsky, Chair Pro Tem