

Conservation Advisory Committee Report to the Town Board January 27, 2025

It is with regret that I report that the Clean Energy Community program, which we had hoped would deliver \$5-10 thousand dollars in grants to the Town, was abruptly withdrawn in late November and we are unable to provide this. We remain undaunted and are gathering our resources to continue to earn points for Bronze Certification as a Climate Smart Community, using many of those same CEC actions to complete CSC actions.

Our work with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County has led to a partnership for community education and engagement. In order to complete this action and continue cooperation with CCEUC they ask for your approval via Resolution to include them in this and future collaborative efforts. That resolution was forwarded to the Board for your consideration.

Supervisor Corcoran asked the CAC to look into a funding opportunity for an EV charging station with EVunited. This request has prompted many phone calls and contacts. A copy of my email to the Supervisor summarizing my most recent activity is included in my report and I will continue to look for more data as well as following through on funding options.

We are hoping to have an event to coincide with Earth Day celebrations in collaboration with Ulster County DEC and possibly with the Milton Landing Committee. Rosemary Wein extended an invitation to attend their next meeting. The DEC would like to host a tree planting event and we hope to expand that to showcase the Sands Avenue Park and the Dog Park facility with other fun and informative activities and vendors.

Our letter to the Planning Board in regards to the proposed Orchard on Hudson development was read at the January 13 Town Board meeting. As I explained then, the Planning Board does not allow time for public input or questions except at the Public Hearing scheduled just prior to final approval of a project. In this monthly report we emphasize the need for more transparency to the public on projects of this scope to allow time for proper planning and advisement which, in the long run, would save the developer time and money and create a better product for the Town.

These are the CAC concerns in regards to the Orchard on Hudson project: carbon emissions from slowed traffic and idling cars waiting to make turns into and from the development, as well as along the hamlet 9W corridor; drainage concerns; potential watershed contamination; watershed concerns; and connectivity issues to Town businesses. All of these directly impact our residents and businesses.

The CAC was not given an opportunity to add comments early in the process, and neither were Town residents. Theirs and our questions and thoughts could serve to support such a development and offer suggestions to mitigate environmental concerns. We are hoping that some type of policy can be employed to alert the CAC to proposals of this type and magnitude so that we can offer assistance and support to all Town departments in their determinations and directives in a timely fashion and within the Planning process.

Respectfully submitted, Mici Simonofsky, CAC Chair