

Broome County Environmental Management Council

Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County Executive • Stacy Merola, Director



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Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC) Notes from the meeting held Thursday, January 3, 2008 United Way Building, Jenson Road, Vestal, NY

Present:

Members-at-Large: André LaClair, Tony Lubzanski, Julia Hoover, Chris Burger, Erin Heard, and Karen Ciatyk

CAC Reps: Cindy Westerman (Vestal)

Special Reps: Kevin Mathers

Legislative Rep: Ron Keibel

Associate Members: Bill Heaviside and Mary Cronk

Staff/Intern: Stacy Merola and Beth Egitto

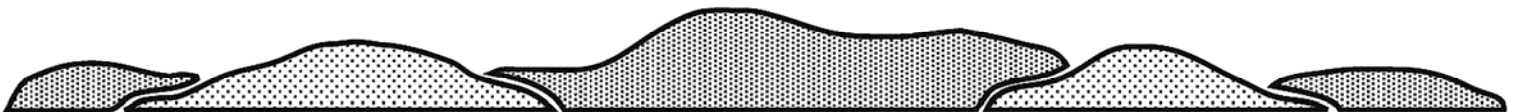
Visitors/Guests: Tim Conner and Brittany Cronk

Absent with Excuse: Josephine Chu, Ken Holmes, and Terry Woodnorth

1. Andre **convened** the meeting at **7:08 pm**. Cindy moved, Tony seconded to approve December minutes with one typo correction. Motion carried.

2. **Privilege of the Floor/Announcements/Member Items of Interest**

- 2008 Household Hazardous Waste collection dates were circulated along with a brochure from the Division of Solid Waste Management (DSWM) with tips for waste reduction during the holiday season. The brochure also gave details about where and how to dispose of Christmas trees.
- A sign up sheet for 2008 EMC special events was circulated. This included sign ups for Earth Fest, JKLS Photo Show Opening Reception, Book Recycling Fair and Riverbank Clean-Up.
- Stacy shared an article from the Press & Sun Bulletin that had an opinion from Terry Woodnorth, Associate Member, touting the energy efficiency benefits of LED Christmas lights. There was also an article in Waste News, "Ways To Resist Consumption Frenzy", that highlighted ways to reduce waste during the excessively consumptive holiday season.
- Ken Holmes, City of Binghamton Beautification Coordinator, informed EMC via email that he and several residents are applying for a \$25K food security grant to establish the Binghamton Food Initiative, a network of community, governmental, institutional, non-profit, and private organizations with the capacity to comprehensively address the efficiency, sustainability and equitability of Binghamton's food system. The fundamental goals of the initiative are reducing food insecurity and hunger, improving residents' health and nutrition status, promoting local and sustainable food production and establishing networks of communication.
- The Focus the Nation Teach-In about Global Warming is planned for January 31st at 7pm at BU. EMC does not have final details as the Campus Climate Challenge students are on winter break.
- Sierra Club will be presenting the annual Lynda Spickard award at their business meeting on Jan. 15th at 7:30pm to Barb and Alan Jones for their leadership in saving the Glen. There will be a potluck dinner beforehand at 6:30pm. Attendees should bring an organic dish to pass.
- Cindy will give her presentation about her trip to Africa at the Naturalist Club meeting Wed., Jan. 23 at 7:30pm, Vestal Library.
- Erin read an article in National Geographic stating that computers and electronics that were collected for recycling sometimes end up in third world countries where they are burned and cause many pollution problems. She feels there should be more outreach about what happens to electronics and other items after they are brought to the HHW facility at the landfill. Stacy said the DSWM puts specific language in their electronics recycling contract to ensure materials stay in US markets.



3. Guest Presentation: Glacial and Post Glacial Influences on Development in Broome County, Tim Conner, Earth Science Teacher, Chenango Forks HS

The glacier was the most significant player in the development of our local landscape and environment. It also continues to play an indirect but important role in our community's past, present and future. In Binghamton it is estimated that the glacier was 3500 feet thick and probably exerted a pressure of over a billion tons per mi². By 16,000 years ago the glacier started melting, releasing billions of gallons of water. This carved gaps in our hillsides called windgaps, rearranged and rounded rocks, dropped huge deposits of sediment on the surface as hills and ridges, formed vast lakes, kettles and alluvial fans, and had many other impacts. As a result of the glacier, this part of the state has two very distinct types of land, hillside hardpans and valley sediments. The hillsides formed as a result of hardpan that was pressed on eroded hills with incredible force that formed an impermeable rind. The valleys, completely reworked by surging meltwater streams, consist of gravel and sand sediment that easily accepts water and as a result are filled with extensive aquifers.

The thick, well-drained valley soils have made the area attractive for development and industry but there is a downside. Spills, industrial wastes and other contaminants move easily through the valley soils, polluting aquifers. Furthermore, the gravel and sand deposits are increasingly valuable to mining companies. The mining pits are not always well planned and mar the landscape. The hillsides are attractive for municipal waste disposal due to their impermeability and poor drainage which allows them to encapsulate the waste to protect water supplies. Therefore, while the landscape formed by the glacier has been a blessing by providing favorable conditions for development, it is essential to consider the geological features of the landscape when planning for future development to avoid these negative consequences. A question and answer period followed.

4. The Council took a short break.

5. Committee Reports:

Natural Resources Committee (NRC) - The NRC did not meet in December. **Next meeting:** Thurs., January 17, 4:30pm, BCOB.

Recycling & Waste Management Committee (RWMC) – Tony reported that the RWMC met on December 17. Topics of discussion included the Final SEIS for Landfill Section IV Entrance Evaluation, the 20-year update of the BC Solid Waste Management Plan, and holiday recycling.

The RWMC discussed two letters regarding recycling at local events. The 1st letter is addressed to the event coordinator of the Spiedie Fest and Balloon Rally requesting that they work with Debra Smith, BC Materials Recovery Manager to improve the processing logistics to make the event's recycling program more effective. This letter is in response to complaints that the recycling containers at the event were overflowing causing some event patrons to throw recyclables in the trash. **ACTION ITEM 1:** Erin moved and Chris seconded to approve the letter with the following amendments: in the last sentence of the 3rd paragraph take out the words "look to"; in the 1st sentence of the 4th paragraph change to "We encourage you to continue working with..." All in favor; motion passed.

The 2nd letter is addressed to the Executive Director of BC Community Charities, Inc. in regard to recycling at the Dick's Sporting Goods Open at Enjoie Golf Course. The letter, also in response to complaints about the lack of recycling requests that the organizers work with Debra Smith to improve recycling efforts at the event. **ACTION ITEM 2:** Erin moved, Chris seconded to approve the letter with the following amendment: in the 1st sentence of the 4th paragraph change to "We encourage you to work with..." Motion carried. There was brief discussion about whether language could be put into contracts when groups are using county run facilities to ensure properly recycling. Ron Keibel suggested that this may be a question best addressed to the County Attorney.

Next meeting: Mon., January 28, 4:30pm, BCOB.

6. Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC) Reports:

Vestal – Cindy reported the CAC met December 11. They almost have a final version of the stream report. CAC Chair, Dick Pastore discussed the report with the Town Supervisor. He wants to see more specific recommendations and wants to look into obtaining one permit for a year of stream work based on the reports recommendations. Cindy mentioned that the CAC has discussed the potential logging at Jones Park. The idea was proposed by Jim Bakowski, Vestal Parks, who has not yet come up with a specific plan. She also gave an update on the proposed development for the Jenson Road area. She found out that other developers, besides McGowan, are interested in that area. She also has been trying to find out more information about the Town of Vestal's LWRP grant application. She will give an update when she has more information. Next Meeting: Tues., Jan 22, 7:30pm, Vestal Town Hall.

7. Staff & Chair Reports:

- NiSource comments – Stacy shared copies of comments she sent to the US Fish & Wildlife Service about the draft EIS scope for NiSource Pipeline Companies' multi-state Habitat Conservation Plan and related Incidental Take Permit (Dec 8). Comments included requesting a public comment opportunity for the draft EIS scope, questions about length of coverage for an ITP, questioning requests for relief of administrative burdens and detailed budget analysis, inquiring about changes of circumstances that would trigger supplements to the DEIS, and questions about non-federal and private landowners activities, among other things.

- Stacy received a letter inviting her to a meeting/luncheon of the local chapter of the American Public Works Association to accept the 2007 Community Involvement Award. Stacy and Beth will attend the awards ceremony January 15th at The Spot Restaurant.

8. Next meeting: Thurs., February 7 @ 7:00pm, United Way Board Rm, Vestal.
The meeting adjourned at **9:35 pm**.

Beth Egitto, Recorder;
Stacy Merola, Contributor