

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

March 16, 2010
Jamestown, New York

Members Present: Doug Conroe (*Chair*), Dave Wilson, Claire Quadri, Randy Peterson, Bob Sundell, Kim Sherwood, Ruth Lundin, John Jablonski

Others Present: Christine Kinn

Excused: Harry Centner, Bill Boria

1. CALL TO ORDER

Doug Conroe called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

2. FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES REVIEW

Dave Wilson moved, and Bob Sundell seconded, to accept the minutes as written. All ayes.

3. CONTINUING BUSINESS

CHAUTAQUA LAKE WATERSHED ACTIVITY

The draft plan is still with consultants. There were no announcements, comments or discussion.

WEMO

Kim Sherwood reported on the March 6th presentation at the landowners' association 18th annual event. It was well received by the 120 or so in attendance although that was only about half as many as usual. Nothing new is scheduled.

NYSDEC Environmental Notice Bulletin (ENB)

No discussion or action taken on the TriJames site in Kiantone or Roblin Steel site in Dunkirk.

COAL ASH

Claire Quadri relayed an email she had received with information from DEC's Solid Waste Division regarding changes in policy. The proposed changes are posted on the website but are not in review yet. She said she was told to expect to see the review period announced in about a month.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chris Kinn reported that public meeting compilations have been sent to consultants. The focus group comments will be going out tomorrow. Mark Geise wanted to compile and characterize the themes / statistics before sending. They didn't separate input from the focus group sessions. Rob Kearns of WRT is reviewing all the comments. The next set of public meetings will most likely be sometime in May.

Members reviewed the input from the focus group for Environment/Waste. There is concern about specifying issues at County level because of home rule by towns. Chris suggested that the County can promote policy that has a comprehensive perspective.

MARCELLUS SHALE GAS

Not discussed.

WIND

The DEIS comment period for Westfield Ripley project closes on May 17th. An extension was given at a Ripley Town meeting special session. Information is on the town's web site: <http://www.ripleywestfieldwind.ene.com> and hardcopies are available at Ripley and Westfield libraries and one at County Planning office. Claire is reviewing portions of it.

Claire explained why this project is a major issue for EMC. She cited "scope creep" for one. The original proposal was for around 30 turbines. Currently there are "up to" eighty-seven (87) turbines proposed, and there may be additional projects with cumulative effects. All turbines are addressed collectively, not individually. The project's location still extends as far to the east and west as the original but farther south.

Another issue she noted is procedural: segmenting under SEQR. Numbers and locations are not consistent from one document to the next, and it presents two options: a smaller number of larger (430 foot) turbines, and a larger number of smaller (400 foot) turbines. Turbines are shown on properties that have not been leased. Site planning was done for a previous project. This one does not include a site plan. There is proposed roadway construction in the towns of North Harmony and Sherman to the south. A batch plant is now proposed for the Town of Chautauqua.

Claire said she would leave review of the avian impacts to those more expert but did mention that two important bird areas are depicted as points rather than areas and bird numbers are addressed by estimated percentage of mortality. Doug said he has talked to Gil Randall and Gil has offered to provide comments regarding birding impacts in time for next month's meeting.

In addition, Claire said she was concerned about this project because it is likely to be the first to actually get built in the County and will set a precedent for review procedures and policies such as PILOT agreements for future projects. Chris stated that she would like to see small wind promoted more as it would benefit local residents more directly, especially commercial and agriculture.

There was some discussion regarding the tone of the Council's remarks and how to avoid sounding entirely negative when the impacts are potentially all negative. Not all state and federal agencies have involved status and those that do may not see this project as a priority. Kim moved to send a letter to involved state agencies asking them to review the document thoroughly and comment on its completeness and potential impacts. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Dave moved to adjourn and Claire seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 27, 2010 at 4:30 p.m. in the 4th Floor Conference Room of the Hall R. Clothier Building in Mayville.

(Notes compiled by Kim Sherwood and C. Kinn)