

Rondout Creek 11/28/18 Meeting Notes

Rondout Municipal Center Room M15

Recorded by Rebecca Martin, Riverkeeper

Start time: 4:09pm

End time: 5:55pm

Present: Laura Finestone, Eric Stewart, Andrew Faust, John Messerschmidt, Jen Epstein, Rebecca Martin, Sarah Underhill, Manna Jo Greene, Richard Parisio.

Regular Business

1. Notes from October Meeting: Approved with the following changes, “*Mary’s fees are \$1,000 for brochure*” and “*group discussed sending a letter to all 14 mission area communities...*” [VIEW](#)
2. Introductions: Rosendale resident Richard Parisio attended his first meeting and is interested in learning more about the group. He worked for the DEC for 25 years, retiring in 2009. His background is in outreach and environmental education. Laura Heady informed him about the RCWA. Manna Jo Greene from Rosendale (and Clearwater) was also in attendance.

Upcoming Events:

1. Rondout Valley Growers Association (RVGA): “Health of the Rondout” panel was discussed. The group decided that it should be a Riverkeeper panel idea for the future. Laura brought up concerns regarding the recent E. coli/Lettuce outbreak and whether the Rondout Creek was safe to use for farmers. Richard asked if laws were nuanced enough that a creek would meet the quality standard and asked what the regulations say. He relayed that bacterial problems in streams have short term effects (and die-off) while heavy metals for example when detected can make the waterbody unusable.
 - a. **Contact the RVGA to get event/meeting schedule. Are they open to public?**

2. RCWA Summit: The group will look into hosting a summit in October during Creek Week, and created a ‘summit’ task force under the umbrella of the Outreach/Education Committee, which was also a newly created committee during the meeting.
3. Eric asked if Jen and/or Dan of Riverkeeper would attend the High Falls Planning Group meeting schedule for Wednesday 12/12, 10:30-12:30 in M15 of the Rondout Municipal Complex. Other participants include the Town of Marbletown, the High Falls Conservancy, the D&H Canal Society, the O&W Rail Trail, and engineering/planning firm Barton & Loguidice.

Old Business

1. Steering Committee

- a. **Membership.** New steering committee membership includes Andrew Faust (Wawarsing), John Messerschmidt (Town of Rochester) and a temporary seat with Richard Parisio (Town of Rosendale).

2. Communications Committee

- a. **Membership.** Eric Stewart (Brochure) and Laura Finestone (Articles)
 - i. **Brochure Update.** The Marbletown ECC voted to pledge \$200 towards the RCWA logo design. Maryann, the graphic designer, will submit the bill to the town for payment. The Logo may be \$500 or slightly more.
 - ii. [The LEWP Brochure](#) was shared as a resource/example for a map example for the RCWA brochure.
 - iii. Sarah relayed tips from the Ulster County Environment Management Council (UCEMC) and member Emilie Hauser who said that the DEC’s Estuary program might have funding for the brochure
 - iv. Manna asked if we were using the watershed plan.
 1. **ACTION: Draft of letter to Rochester. Pledge for money. Include Budget into text of letter. (Manna**

advised against small, piecemeal requests to munis, and that she reminded us that the vision underlying the watershed plan was that municipalities would make a substantial commitment (~\$10k annually) for a watershed manager staff.)

b. **Articles Update.** Laura was working on a Gmail calendar layer.

i. **ACTION: Create calendar layer** [LINK](#)

3. Riparian Zone Planting Committee

a. Membership: Andrew Faust (Wawarsing)

i. Andrew met with Beth Roessler (Hudson River Estuary Program Stream Buffer Coordinator), and a Rosendale project was recommended (Saunderskill Farms). Beth works in many counties (Dutchess, Columbia, Orange and Ulster), and the map shows three projects to reach out to property owners to do maintenance on: a) Chad, Coxing Kill with success of four years of projects there; b) Rosendale by the rec center and c) a property owned by Judith Karpova on Sundale Road on a creek that doesn't have a name. (Sage brush? Sap bush creek?) Judith is on the county EMC as well.

1. **ACTION: Laura asked about a project on the rail trail. Andrew will write to ask her. A project that Mike Callen did with the Boy Scouts currently needs maintenance. Andrew to set up site visit with Beth next week to meet Chad (Coxing Kill) and will invite others to future meetings like these once he gets a hang of how they'll go.**

- ii. Manna stated that Riparian projects were important for carbon sequestration and storage with every tree that is planted and maintained.
- iii. Jen Epstein asked if Trees for tribs provide signage? Rail Trail coalition could be contacted (Eric is on the committee). Some ideas included that signage could be added at the pond by the High School.

4. **Outreach and Education Committee (new)**

- a. Membership: Richard Parisio (Rosendale), Andrew Faust (Wawarsing), John Messerschmidt (Rochester)
 - i. Richard asked if there was Rondout Creek education/ curriculum in the school system. Laura described previous work such as testing with the kids, kayaking, and in 2015, the WAVE program. Richard has an interest in annual events in school system or more regular programs (River of Words). Laura suggested that he bring in budget and a project idea for River of Words.
 - ii. Clearwater had a grant to do watershed education with Nubian Directions in Poughkeepsie. They have created a model for the [Fall Kill Creek \(planning project\)](#) for High School aged students seeking their GED. It is designed to work on green building/energy hands on projects, such as constructing a green stormwater project. A powerpoint was created for Rondout Creek Watershed council.

New Business

1. Set dates for 2019.
 - a. The group set their January meeting and decided to keep the location the same to avoid any confusion for new members.
 - b. Members were locked out of the building tonight who arrived late and the group asked how to handle a situation like that in the future.
 - i. **Rebecca to contact Clerk's office to get directives on how to lock up or prop open the door at the Rondout Municipal Center.**
2. Laura asked that we continue to invite Marbletown Supervisor Rich Parete to the meetings, who is on the [Catskill Watershed Corporation Board](#). We should also invite members of the [Rondout Esopus Land Conservancy](#).