

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, October 4, 2007 Chenango Town Hall Community Room, Chenango Bridge, NY

Present:

Members-at-Large: André LaClair, Bill Heaviside, Tony Lubzanski, Julia Hoover, Mary Cronk and Karen Ciatyk

CAC Reps: Cindy Westerman (Vestal)

Legislative Reps: Ron Keibel

Staff/Intern: Stacy Merola and Beth Egitto

Associate Members: Terry Woodnorth

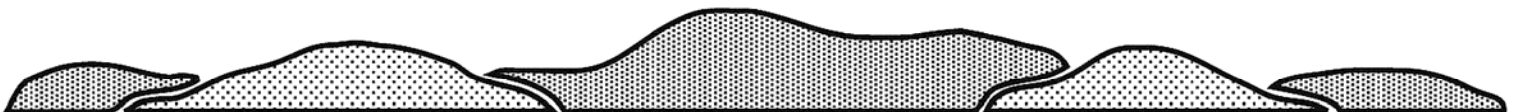
Visitors/Guests: Ken Holmes

Absent with Excuse: Erin Heard, Josephine Chu, Chris Burger, Doug Garner and Chip McElwee

1. Andre **convened** the meeting at **7:10 pm**. Bill moved, Mary seconded to approve September minutes with the following amendment: under the sixth announcement bullet, "Cindy mentioned that the Sierra Club is *helping* Binghamton *implement* the COOL Cities Initiative". Motion carried.

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

- Riverbank Cleanup that will be held Saturday, October 6 from 9-noon. The EMC team will again clean William "Billy" Hill Park, a Town of Union park in Johnson City.
- There will be a public meeting on Tuesday, October 9, at 7pm at the State Office Building to discuss the increase in the local wild bear population and the growing number of conflicts with humans and pets that has occurred as a result.
- NYS Assoc of EMCs and NYS Assoc of Conservation Commission's annual Conference on the Environment, "Plugging Into Tomorrow" will be held Friday, Oct 19 – Sunday, Oct 21 @ Proctors Conference Center, State St, Schenectady, NY. Those interested should register by September 19. Registration for NYSAEMC members is \$90, \$35 for students; meals and hotel are extra.
- The Broome County Division of Solid Waste Management will hold several community-wide electronics recycling collections, which are from 9am to 2pm and limited to BC residents (no businesses). **Collection Sites:** **9/29** - Conklin Highway Garage, Park & Ride (Rte 12A); **10/6** – BC Dept of Social Service parking lot, City of Binghamton and Deposit Highway Garage; **10/13** - Colesville Highway Garage; **10/27** - Grippen Park and Dorchester Park. Materials accepted include computers, monitors, printers, televisions, VCRs, modems, stereos, laptops, keyboards, radios, fax machines, pagers, microwaves and mobile phones. Materials not accepted include counter top appliances such as coffee makers, toasters or can openers, telephones, answering machines, vacuums, humidifiers, dehumidifiers or smoke detectors, and large appliances such as dryers, washing machines, dishwashers, refrigerators, or air conditioners. For more information contact DSWM at 607-778-2250.
- Stacy circulated New York Recycles Pledge Cards to celebrate America Recycles Day. This year's prizes are a trip to Orlando, FL and a gift certificate for recycled content lawn furniture.
- Beth circulated an announcement for a free Green Buildings Open House being held Saturday, October 6 from 10am to 4pm as part of the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association's Green Buildings Open House and American Solar Energy Society's National Solar Tour. The tour provides a unique opportunity to see first hand renewable energy and green building practices at work in the area. It features 25 homes and business in Tompkins, Tioga and Schuyler Counties. Owners will be on site to answer questions and give information.



- In reference to flooding issues described in the letter regarding the proposed JC Wal-Mart Julia asked whether the site is located in the floodplain. Beth responded that it is not and the flooding issues described are related to drainage.
- Andre circulated an article that stated that Lockheed Martin will be heating its Owego facility with wood. He questioned which technology would be used to do this.

3. Presentation: “Wood Burning: An Issue of Health, Environmental Stewardship, and Public Policy”, Andre LaClair, EMC Chair and owner of Corbeau Science and Technology

Andre gave a presentation addressing the health and environmental issues related to burning wood, especially outdoor wood boilers (OWBs). There are several potential health impacts that may result from the smoke resulting from burning wood, including respiratory, heart, immune system and eye disorders and diseases. Current safety standards regarding particulate matter set by federal and state agencies may not adequately address these health impacts. According to Andre’s research, OWBs burn at temperatures that are very low for efficient combustion. High emission rates coupled with these low temperatures may lead to a variety of combustion byproducts that pose a health risk. Furthermore, several factors influence the dispersion of smoke from OWBs such as wind velocity and direction, atmospheric stability and local terrain effects. The current design of outdoor wood boilers does not address the issues of efficient wood combustion and smoke dispersion. Furthermore, they do not address the cumulative impacts that occur as a result of multiple OWBs in close proximity to one another. While wood burning is an appealing form of heat for many since wood is considered free, this does not take into account the environmental impacts on air quality and forest health. Andre feels that standards should be established to ensure health and safety based on human physiology first and economic considerations second. He feels that lawmakers must enact laws that are substantiated by science and technology and plans should be prescribed that support a transition from one technology to another, when necessary, to uphold human and environmental health. Questions followed. Andre circulated a draft resolution “Calling for Environmental Standards Governing All Wood Burning Devices and Legislation to Protect Public Air Quality from Wood Burning Emissions” for review prior to the next meeting of the Natural Resources Committee where this topic will be discussed further. Andre was thanked for his thoughtful and time consuming research.

4. Committee Reports:

Natural Resources Committee (NRC) - No meeting held in September. Beth gave an update on the New York Regional Interconnect (NYRI) Power Line. The designation of the Northeast area including Broome County as a National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) has been confirmed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Broome has contributed \$50,000 for legal representation for the coalition of impacted counties to fight the NYRI Power Line. However, the fight will likely remain between state and federal entities due to the NIETC designation. The special permit for the Wal-Mart proposed for Lester Ave in Johnson City has been approved by the JC Village Board, and the Planning Board has filed a Negative Declaration regarding environmental impacts as a part of the SEQR process. In response to the letter approved at September’s full EMC meeting, the Village Board stated that pervious pavement would not be feasible on that site. There was no response to any of the other comments in the letter. Pending site plan approval by the Village Board the project will be able to move forward. **Next meeting:** Thurs., October 18, 4:30pm, BCOB.

Recycling & Waste Management Committee (RWMC) – No meeting held in September. Stacy gave an update on the Landfill Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS). The adoption of the final SEIS by the Legislature will likely be held over or withdrawn this month so that the consultants can consider alternative “X” that was suggested by the engineer hired by the Landfill CAC. The Book Recycling Fair was a success. Over 23 tons of books were recycled and over 18,000 books were given away for reuse. This was more recycled than last year but less given away. The number of volunteers went up to 149 for this year. **Next meeting:** Mon., Oct 22, 4:30pm, BCOB.

Membership Committee - Ken Holmes was an intern with the EMC in fall of 2006. He currently is working for the Binghamton Neighborhood Assemblies Project as a Beautification Coordinator. Bill moved and Mary seconded that Ken become an Associate Member. All in favor, motion passed. Welcome (back) Ken!

5. Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC) Reports:

Vestal – Cindy reported that the CAC is almost finished with the report addressing flooding issues in Vestal streams. The group had wanted to get feedback from a member of the planning board before the final draft stage but there has been no contact with the member that they were going to work with. The document is currently in draft form and there is still some work to be done. **Next meeting:** Tuesday, Oct. 23, 7:30pm, Vestal Town Hall.

6. Staff & Chair Reports:

- Stacy asked that all members refer to the 2007 Work Plan and consider a few items that they would like to see on the 2008 Work Plan. Topics that many members have brought up on several occasions are Energy and Climate Change. Members may like to consider how these should be included in the Work Plan. Committee items can be discussed further at each committee's meeting.
- Stacy received positive feedback from the Attorney General's office about the meeting that was held with BCEMC members and others in July. Due to the success of the meeting with the Broome EMC the AG's office reached out to other EMC's in the state for similar meetings and solicitation of feedback about their local issues.

7. The meeting adjourned at **10:00 pm.**

Next meeting: Thurs., November 1 @ 6pm, Decker Room, BC Public Library, downtown Binghamton.

Beth Egitto, Recorder;
Stacy Merola, Editor