



# State of New York County of Broome Government Offices

## Environmental Management Council

Jason T. Garnar, County Executive · Larry Lepak, Chair

**Broome County Environmental Management Council (EMC)  
Notes from meeting held Thursday, May 9th, 2019 at 5:30pm  
Exhibit Room, Broome County Library  
185 Court Street, Binghamton, NY**

**Present:**

**MAL:** Ian Jensen, Bill Heaviside, Dylan Horvath, Jo Render, Tony Lubzanski, Chris Burger

**Leg Reps:** Susan Ryan

**Staff:** Beth Lucas

**Others:** George Bezama, Christine Clifton, Jacob von Mechow (Delta), Mike Haas (Delta)

1. The meeting was **convened at 5:30pm.**

2. **Presentation: Government Plaza Green Infrastructure Project**

Broome County received \$1.7M in funding from New York State's Green Innovation Grant Program to fund design and construction of green infrastructure improvements at Government Plaza, a site in downtown Binghamton that houses the City, County and State Office Buildings. Beth Lucas introduced the project, outlining the need for structural repairs at the site, as well as issues with the flow of pedestrian traffic, aesthetics, landscaping, and use for public events. Jacob von Mechow and Mike Haas from Delta Engineers, the designers on the project, gave an overview of the green infrastructure features (and other design components) being designed for the site. Site features include publicly accessible green roofs, bioretention, pervious pavers, and rainwater cisterns. The design is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2019 with phased construction anticipated for 2020 and 2021.

3. **Announcements/ Privilege of the Floor/Items of Interest**

- The Phase III Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) for the Susquehanna River has been drafted by the DEC and is available for public comment until June 7<sup>th</sup>. The WIP is required for all states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed as part of efforts to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution that enters the Bay.
- Binghamton Rust 2 Green, Cornell University Design Connect and the City of Binghamton will be holding a public meeting to show the results of a project to develop design concepts for a park at Rockbottom Dam. The meeting will be held May 11<sup>th</sup> from 11am-1pm at the Broome County Library.
- The NYS Consolidated Funding Application, the main opportunity to apply for funding under several NYS grant programs, has been opened and will be available until the application deadline on July 26<sup>th</sup>.
- There will be a grand opening celebration and ribbon cutting for a new preserve, owned and operated by Waterman Conservation Center on Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. The Pettus Hill Preserve is located in West Windsor.

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- Go All Out Broome County and the Triple Cities Hiking Club have launched a joint program, the Broome County Dozen Hiking Challenge. Hiking Challengers can submit their hiking log to the TCHC to receive a patch acknowledging their accomplishment. Info is available at [www.goalloutbroome.com/bc12](http://www.goalloutbroome.com/bc12)

#### **4. Local Implementation of the NYS Plastic Bag Ban**

As a result of recent Legislation at the State Level, plastic bags will be banned beginning in May of 2020. Counties have the opportunity to opt in to a tax on the use of paper bags. Susan Ryan reported on a project by a group of students in her Environmental Impact Statements Class to assess the environmental impacts of implementation of the ban on the local level. They looked at aspects of the use of bags based on various aspects of their life cycle. Beth noted that she spoke with Deb Smith about Broome County's plans regarding the paper bag tax. She stated that right now there are many unknowns about implementation, so a decision has not yet been made. The bag tax will be \$0.05. This will be split among the state, going to the Environmental Protection Fund (\$0.03) and the local government (\$0.02). The local share must go toward the purchase of renewable bags to be distributed to the community. Some unknown factors include the cost and logistics of implementing the program.

#### **5. Climate Smart Communities and Clean Energy Communities**

- Broome County has officially been designated a Clean Energy Community by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). The designation recognizes recognition of the County's leadership in reducing energy use, cutting costs and driving clean energy locally. Actions completed by the County to earn this designation include participation in a community-based Solarize campaign, establish an Energize NY Finance program, adopt a benchmarking policy, perform energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades. This designation makes Broome County eligible for a \$150,000 grant for additional clean energy projects. Public Works has identified a project to upgrade lighting at the County Office building from fluorescent to LED. An application will be submitted by the end of June.
- Beth reviewed the status of Broome County's Climate Smart Communities certification efforts. Planning has continued work on updating completed actions in the NYS Climate Smart Communities online portal. It is anticipated that the County has completed enough actions to obtain enough points for bronze certification. However, efforts to pass the Climate Smart Communities pledge by the Legislature have not progressed.
  - o **ACTION ITEM:** Chris Burger made a motion to send a letter to the Legislature and County Executive commending existing efforts to improve sustainability and to endorse continued efforts to achieve Climate Smart Communities certification, including passage of the Climate Smart Communities pledge. Seconded by Ian Jensen. All in favor, motion passed.

#### **6. CAC and Committee Updates**

- **Vestal CAC** – Not present
- **Fenton CAC** – Not present
- **Photo Show Committee** – Beth and Larry met with the Broome County Arts Council to begin discussions about holding the Exhibit for the Photo Show at their new Artisan

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Gallery in May of 2020. Larry will call a meeting of the Photo Show Committee in late summer to begin plans for

- **Work Plan Committee** – Bill distributed proposed updates to the Broome County Bylaws. Edits include the following:

- **ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS OF THE FULL COUNCIL**

- **SECTION 1 – REGULAR MEETINGS**

The Council shall hold its regular meetings ~~on the first Thursday of every~~ each month, ~~unless extenuating circumstances (such as a legal holiday) cause the Executive Committee to reschedule. If deemed necessary , and only with Council approval, regular meetings may be scheduled bi-monthly to meet the needs of the Council.~~ Regular Council meetings ~~are~~ shall be open to the public.

- **SECTION 7 – VOTING PROCEDURE**

When necessary, the Executive Committee may authorize the Chairperson to obtain votes from Council members by telephone, email or mail.

**ACTION ITEM:** Modifications of this section are intended to make the bylaws consistent with the current EMC meeting schedule. Chris Burger made a motion to adopt the outlined changes to the EMC bylaws. Seconded by Ian Jensen. All in favor, motion passed.

- **ARITCLE VII: BY-LAWS AMENDMENTS**

- **SECTION 2 – RATIFICATION**

Amendments to the by-laws shall require a two-thirds vote of all voting Council members ~~and shall be subject to approval by the County Executive and Legislature.~~

**ACTION ITEM:** Modifications of this section are intended to make the bylaws consistent with the Broome County Charter and Code. Ian Jensen made a motion to adopt the outlined change. Seconded by Larry Lepak. All in favor, motion passed.

7. Meeting is **adjourned at 7:45pm**. Next meeting will be held on Thursday July 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm in the Decker Room at the Broome County Library. At the July meeting, Director of Planning, Frank Evangelisti, along with other Planning staff will attend to do stakeholder outreach for the Broome County Comprehensive Plan Update in development. Planning will send an invitation to other environmental groups/organizations inviting them to attend as well.