

Conservation Advisory Council | City of Newburgh, New York

The Heritage Center, 123 Grand St., Newburgh, NY 12550

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Council Members:

Chuck Thomas | Chair

Gail Fulton

Zachary German

Chris Knasiak

Lesly Mejia

Mark Sanchez-Potter



Conservation Advisory Council

Minutes of Meeting

August 5, 2024

6:30 p.m. – Heritage Center

- **Roll Call**

Present:

**Chuck Thomas, Chairperson, Gail Fulton,
Zachary German, Chris Knasiak, Mark Sanchez-Potter**

Excused Absent:

Lesly Mejia

Also Present:

**Tallie Carter, Assistant Corporation Counsel
J.K. Gentile, Secretary
Angelo Schembari, Consulting Arborist**

Guests:

**Kathy Lawrence, Savonni Bailey
Steven Gonzalez, Wayne Grant, Julia Raskin**

Meeting called to order 6:45p.m.

- **Public Comment on Agenda Items**

No comment.

- **Environmental Justice Fellows 2024 Program**

EJF Savonni Bailey and Steven Gonzalez reported on the current work the EJF's have been engaged in: community outreach/tree care at NFA Main, South Middle School, Calvary Presbyterian Church, Ward Brothers Park, and movie night at Saft Harbors; marketing materials; green space mapping;

Hudson River kayak tour of historic Newburgh; attended the Scenic Hudson Gala; and attended the 2-day New York State Urban Forestry Council ReLeaf Annual Conference.

Administration

- Approval of minutes -July 2024 - The Council unanimously approved.
- Monthly Financial Report – No new expenses to report.
- Volunteer Hours -tracking and reporting – The Chairperson encouraged all members to actively report their hours.
- Training – The Assistant Corporation Counsel said a link to mandatory training videos will be sent out shortly.
- 2023 Annual Report -The Chairperson stated that he is working on a draft for the members to review.
- CAC Website -Tabled.
- 2025 Budget
The Chairperson submitted a spreadsheet of proposed amounts per CAC budget lines. The Council reviewed and discussed justifications for; office supplies, printing, Environmental Justice Fellows Program, tree planting and maintenance (including developmental pruning and general pruning), dues and subscriptions, consultant services, travel and conferences, education and other services/events. It was determined that the Pollinator Event will be replaced with ward mulching events.

Mark Sanchez-Potter motion to accept the proposed 2025 CAC Budget.
Gail Fulton seconded the motion.
The motion passed unanimously.

The CAC budget is due for submission to the Comptroller's office
August 9, 2024.

Old Business

- NYSDEC Urban and Community Forestry Grant -The DEC contract is pending.

- Shoreline Planting Plan -draft letter -Tabled.
- BOA Open Space Steering Committee -The Council unanimously agreed to remove from the agenda.
- **On-going Updates
Sub-Committees:**
- Urban Forestry Sub-Committee.
 - 1) Introduction of Consulting Arborist, Angelo Schemari, MS.
 - 2) Fall tree planting plan.
 - 3) Ash Tree DEC grant

Mr. Schemari, with assistance from Ms. Knasiak, submitted a spreadsheet of prospective sites for the Fall planting for the Council's review. He reported on the next steps; work with DPW to conduct a review and call outs; place a tree order; and meet with the Environment Justice Fellows regarding tree steward outreach. Mr. Schemari also discussed the value in bare-root trees versus container trees. The Council agreed to purchase a combination of both types.

In addition, Mr. Schemari submitted a spreadsheet of Newburgh trees plagued by ash disease for the Council's review and discussed plans to implement Ash Treatment.

- 4) Volunteer report -Tabled.
- 5) Tree Planting Brochures -Tabled.
- 6) Re-Leaf 7/24/24 Conference

Ms. Fulton submitted a written conference recap for the Council's review reporting on grants given, membership fees, NYS tree plantings, parks and gardens, redlining history and a tour taken to the Radix Ecological Sustainability Center.
- Newburgh Climate Ready Sub-Committee

The Assistant Corporation Counsel reported that a meeting was recently held with Mr. German and Mr. Sanchez-Potter to discuss next steps and the website. The website development agreement is on for approval at the next City Council meeting. The first initiative will be a Heating and Cooling campaign.

Mr. German reported meetings will be held twice a month via Zoom.

- DEC Natural Resource Inventory Grant

The Assistant Corporation Counsel reported the Planning and Development Department is currently working with the consultants on the public opinion survey and once completed, the Executive Office will approve and then the Environmental Justice Fellowship will canvas the community.

- EPA Enhanced Air Quality Monitoring for Communities - No update to report.
- Restoration Advisory Board /Stewart Air National Guard Water Project
The Chairperson reported that the meeting last week, discussed including DOT's plans to divert water from 17K to reduce the volume of contaminated stormwater at the Recreation Pond and mentioned the next meeting will be a public meeting.
- LWRP Update – Locally Adopted on 7-10-17 -No update to report.
- Tree Permit -Local Code Revision -No update to report.
- Holtech -Radioactive wastewater -No update to report. The Council unanimously agreed to remove from the agenda.
- The Assistant Corporation Counsel discussed the 2024 Governance Calendar that was submitted for review. Dates were noted pertaining to deadlines and milestones for the rest of the year.
- The Assistant Corporation Counsel discussed Council terms that end in November 2024: Gail Fulton and Mark Sanchez-Potter. There is also one seat currently vacant. In October, the vacancy notice will be posted. Anyone who wants to continue serving on the Council must apply for reappointment.
- **Calendar of Upcoming events (webinars, training, community events)**
 - 8-09-24 Greater Newburgh Parks Conservancy Stakeholders Meeting
 - 8-12-24 City Council Meeting
 - 8-13-24 Architectural Review Council Meeting
 - 8-14-24 Downing Park Conservancy Meeting

- 8-20-24 Planning Board Meeting
- 8-27-24 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
- 9-13-24 Downing Park Olmsted Network Annual Conference

- **Public comment on general CAC non-agenda items:**

No comment.

Chris Knasiak made Motion to Adjourn

Mark Sanchez-Potter seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting concluded 8:27 p.m.