

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

Justin Rider

Mark Sanchez-Potter



Conservation Advisory Council

Minutes of Meeting

May 5, 2025

6:30 p.m. – Heritage Center

- **Roll Call**

Present:

**Zachary German, Acting Chairperson, Gail Fulton,
Chris Knasiak, Mark Sanchez-Potter, Justin Rider**

Absent:

(excused) Chuck Thomas, Chairperson, Lesly Mejia

Also Present:

**Tallie Carter, Assistant Corporation Counsel
Jonathan Midler, City Planner
J.K. Gentile, Secretary**

Meeting called to order 6:31p.m.

- **Public Comment on Agenda Items**
No comment.
- **Coastal Policy Consistency Review**
Quassaick Creek's -Walsh Road Dam Removal

Drew Gamils, Maddie Feaster, Matthew Best, David Stormer, Ph.D. /Riverkeeper appeared before the Council.

Maddie Feaster gave an overview of the proposed project. She stated the purpose for submittal at 60% design is solely due to its joint permit application to the NYS Department of State and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Following NYS Department of State comments, the plans will be completed to 100% design at which time the CAC and City Staff will provide another review.

The City Planner said the City of Newburgh comments and approvals are forthcoming. He asked if there would be floodplain projections.

Ms. Feaster said the FEMA dimensions would not change.

The Council reviewed the submitted Federal Consistency Assessment Form and supplement. Besides the requested changes to 1 (g), 2 (h), 3(a) and 4, the Council found that the proposed action is consistent with the LWRP policy standards as set forth in the City of Newburgh Code of Ordinances §159-5.3 (G).

The Acting Chairperson made a motion to accept the Federal Consistency Assessment Form and supplement based on the 60% design plan, subject to amendments and further review of the final designs.

Justin Rider seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Administration

- Approval of Minutes -April 2025

The Acting Chairperson made a motion to accept the April minutes.

Chris Knasiak seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

- Monthly Financial Report – The Secretary reported the payment of \$2,551.80 to Devitt’s Supply for the April 25, 2025 Arbor Day Tree Planting/20th Year Tree City USA Celebration.
- 2025 CAC Budget and Action Plan – The Council reviewed.
- Volunteer Hours: Tracking and reporting –
Total volunteer hours for the month of April: Ms. Fulton, 2 hours, Mr. German 5 hours, and Mr. Sanchez-Potter 6 hours.
- Annual Disclosure and Training – The Assistant Corporation Counsel had sent the link to the 2025 training videos.
- 2024 Annual Report – Tabled for further revisions by Mr. Sanchez-Potter.

New Business

- Draft appeal to the City Council regarding stricter enforcement of illegal trash dumping and defacing. – Tabled to consider alternatives.
- Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act Resolution Request. – Tabled for further consideration.
- Sanctuary Healing Gardens – Support for Native Plantings and Park Improvements at Crystal Lake. – The CAC received a request for financial support from Betty Bastidas for planting and park benches. The request was denied because the CAC cannot make donations to private organizations. The request will be directed to the Executive Office.

Old Business

- NYSDEC Urban and Community Forestry Grant - The Assistant Corporation Counsel reported the RFP will be released in the upcoming weeks.
- Draft resolution to request the waterfront plan for Con Iron and incinerator/sewer plant areas. – Tabled.
- Quassaick Creek and Schleiermacher Park – Mr. Sanchez-Potter investigated and found rubbish and three tents thought to be used by the unhoused population.
- CSX Underpass Beautification Plan – The Assistant Corporation Counsel reported that she is unable to locate an agreement by CSX to apply a special treatment for a mural and will request the Chairperson to forward any notes he may have regarding this.
- **On-going Updates**
Sub-Committees:
 - Urban Forestry Sub-Committee.
 - 1) Arbor Day 2025 event- Ms. Knasiak gave an overview of the April 25, 2025 event.
 - 2) Spring Tree Planting- Ms. Knasiak spoke of the 8 locations on Prospect Street that had been selected by the city arborist in 2024 and discussed preparing a plan for replacement trees.
 - 3) Tree planting maintenance – Ms. Knasiak will review past planted trees for a status.
 - Newburgh Climate Ready Sub-Committee-Zachary German reported on the actions pending to achieve bronze status; 3 priority pledge elements (Complete Street Policy, EV charging stations and the Natural Resource Inventory), 1 pledge element of various categories, and 1 mandatory pledge element. He requested photos from the Council for use on the website.
 - DEC Natural Resource Inventory Grant - The Assistant Corporation Counsel reported the survey and website are currently under draft.
 - Restoration Advisory Board /Stewart Air National Guard Water Project – Tabled.
 - LWRP Update – Locally Adopted on 7-10-17 -No update to report. The Council agreed to remove from the agenda.
 - Tree Permit -Local Code Revision - The Assistant Corporation Counsel said a revised draft will be available for Council review at the July meeting.
- **Calendar of Upcoming events (webinars, training, community events)**
 - 5-03-25 Riversweep Event
 - 5-09-25 Greater Newburgh Parks Conservancy Stakeholders Meeting
 - 5-13-25 Architectural Review Council Meeting

- 5-12-25 City Council Meeting
- 5-20-25 Planning Board Meeting
- 5-27-25 City Council Meeting
- 5-27-25 Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting
- 6-07-25 Greater Newburgh Parks Conservancy “Green Up Newburgh”
Event at Tyrone Crabb Park

Public comment on general CAC non-agenda items - Mr. Sanchez-Potter inquired about the possibility of engaging DPW to make a pollinator garden. The Assistant Corporation Counsel recommended drafting a plan proposal and encourage the local garden clubs to undertake.

**Mark Sanchez-Potter made Motion to Adjourn
Zachary German seconded.
The motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting concluded at 8:15p.m.