



EMC News

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PESTICIDE NEIGHBOR NOTIFICATION COMMITTEE

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

Jeff Cox and Steve Nicholson attended a joint meeting on July 18 of the County Planning and Health and Human Services Committees to discuss the Pesticide Neighbor Notification Law. Members of the Lawn Care Association and the Farm Bureau spoke out against the law. The EMC and the Ithaca Breast Cancer Alliance were in favor of opting in. Albany County (pop. 300,000) found the law takes 20 staff days/year to enforce. We are researching concerns about a possible increase in the use of granular pesticides, and if the 48-hour notification requirement would cause difficulties implementing Integrated Pest Management practices.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Submitted Steve Uzmann

The ERC reviewed the Elmira Road Site Plan provided by the Benderson Development Company. We submitted comments on the site plan and asked for a positive declaration of environmental significance and preparation of a supplemental EIS due to numerous deviations from the Generic EIS for the Southwest Area Development Plan.

The ERC met August 27. We discussed the latest and presumably final versions of the Tompkins County generic gas leases and our impressions of a seismic "shot" witnessed by 3 members of the committee, two members of the Planning Dept. and one BOR rep. The event was a demonstration of a representative seismic test along the shothole survey line crossing state and county property in Newfield. Joyce Gerbasi made a video of the procedure. We decided to make no amendments to our previous contributions regarding the generic gas leases.

We also discussed at length the "Cayuga Green/Ciminelli Downtown Mixed Use Project." The committee will prepare comments for submission to the scoping session scheduled on this project by September 10.

MUNICIPAL REPORTS

Town of Newfield

Submitted by Donna Jean Darling

- One year after drilling began, Newfield finally has a productive well with flow sufficient to provide water for both the proposed water district No. 2 and emergency back-up supplies for existing district No. 1. The test phase should be completed in October of this year.
- A new member directory has been published by the Newfield Business Association and is available at the Town Clerk's office.
- Newfield Old Home Days celebration will take place Sept. 20 and 21 on the school grounds.

Town of Caroline

Submitted by Steve Nicholson

- On July 11, The Town Board voted unanimously to establish a Planning Board. The desire by residents to preserve aquifer quality and the open, rural character of the town were key deciding issues. They are now searching for candidates to appoint who can represent the geographical areas of the town and different interests and skills.
- There will be a town wide cleanup on September 23-28 for unwanted furniture and appliances. This is in response to the illegal dumping, and a chance to educate residents of the environmental and fiscal costs incurred when illegal dumping occurs on rural lands.
- A new sign along Rt. 79 in Slaterville Springs reminds residents that parts of Caroline, Danby, and Newfield are in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This includes 18% of the County.
- The Caroline Watershed Committee is pursuing a grant that will develop a watershed strategy for Owego Creek.

Look for Municipal Reports in the October EMC News from the Towns of Ithaca and Ulysses.

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DOG PARK UPDATE

by Herb Engman

The proposal to create an off-leash dog park in Tompkins County has been much in the news lately. As the representative of the EMC for the issue I would like to bring you up to date.

A proposal was made by Tompkins County DOG (Dog Owners Group) to establish a dog park in the Treman Marina, generally north of the marina and extending to the lake. The Finger Lake Parks Commission submitted the proposal to the state office and was told that a pilot was permissible, but that the dog park would have to be fenced. The original plan called for a fenced area north of the marina, but not extending to the lake. At a meeting of DOG, city representatives, state park representatives and other interested parties, DOG representatives said fencing that open area would ruin the view toward the lake for everyone and suggested an area close to the Hanger Theater. That proposal is the one currently under consideration.

The issue involves both the City and the state because the City owns the "festival lands," which is in the area of the Hanger Theater and the marina. The issue has substantial public policy implications because State Parks considers this a pilot and may create other dog parks in the state. Similarly the City may create additional sites.

Here are some of the sticking issues:

1. **The size of the park.** Dog park advocates argue that a park of only a few acres will crowd dogs, increasing possibilities if disease transmission and aggressive behavior.
2. **The use of fencing.** Dog park advocates argue that they have allowed their dogs to run off leash in the past and should be able to continue. State Parks argues that their regulations, and the City's law, require dogs to be on leash at all times. Park officials state that once a dog park is established, they will aggressively enforce the leash regulation and law outside the fence. One reason for the fencing is to separate dogs and other state park users.
3. **Environmental Protection.** Another reason given for fencing is to keep dogs from the Hogs' Hole Unique Natural Area, the managed grasslands nesting areas and the shoreline, all of which are considered sensitive natural areas in the Treman Marina's Master Plan. Hog's Hole is a federally-protected wetland, the tall

grass area is managed under recommendations made by the Laboratory of Ornithology, and the shoreline is considered important for shorebirds, especially during migration, because of the loss of wading areas on Lake Ontario and more locally. The Marina area represents one of only three remaining small remnants of the original environment at the south end of Cayuga Lake (the others are Fuertes Bird Sanctuary and the Cornell Biological Field Station).

4. **Access to water and shade.** Dog park advocates want access to water for the dogs and believe the fenced-in area will not have shade.
5. **Multi-user conflicts.** Marina users are cautious about the dog park. Some other users state they are hesitant to use the area because of the dogs running loose.

What's next: the City must decide whether to extend its offer of a moratorium on its leash law in order to attempt a pilot. The current offer expired at the end of August. The City must also decide if it wishes to allow the dog park on any part of its land. The State Parks must decide whether to go ahead with the pilot despite apparent opposition to the current plan from many of the dog park advocates. Either the City or State Parks could also decide to offer a different location. The City, State Parks and I have been attempting to determine if classes at Cornell might be interested in gathering more information on the potential dog park both to inform the decision-making process and to lay some groundwork for later evaluation of the pilot.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

Submitted by Susan Brock

The County has received responses to its RFP for the public safety communications project. Only one vendor (Motorola) provided proposed system designs. Motorola has offered 3 designs, each with different configurations of towers. Some of the towers are in existing locations. Mikel Shakarjian will discuss Motorola's proposals at our September EMC meeting.

See you at the next meeting
Wednesday, September 11th