

TOWN OF CANANDAIGUA
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION BOARD
2021 ANNUAL REPORT

December 16, 2021

Purpose: Town Code (Chapter 18-6) and New York State General Municipal Law (GMU Article 12F Section 239-X Paragraph 1 Subparagraph f) both require that the Environmental Conservation Board (ECB) submit to the Town Board a year end annual report on the work and activities of the ECB. The State law additionally requires that the Town Board forward a copy of the annual report to the Commissioner of Environmental Conservation.

Open Space Preservation:

The Purdy Road PDR application was approved as part of the NYS Department of Ag and Markets Farmland Protection Implementation Grant (PDR) program. As discussion continues regarding the viability of the NYS PDR program the ECB will continue to encourage the town to preserve and protect open space. This year the ECB strongly encouraged the town to purchase land on MCR connected to the Wyffels parcel using reserve funds and state grants, but this action was not pursued.

Natural Resource Protection Referrals:

The ECB Chairman and Development Office staff have continued to work on streamlining the internal review process to create more thorough and comprehensive analysis prior to meeting with applicants and Boards. Check lists are now more thorough, relevant and user friendly.

In 2021, the ECB reviewed twenty four (24) single stage site plans referred by the Town's Project Review Committee. Many of these were for new construction along Canandaigua Lake. Nine (9) variance applications were reviewed, eight (8) subdivisions and one large solar project. The ECB provides a detailed report which the Planning Board respectfully considers during their deliberations.

Natural Resources Inventory: The Natural Resource Inventory was adopted by the Town in 2011, updated in 2020 and completed in 2021. The Planning Exploratory app, completed by OCPB and available to county municipalities provides categories of natural resources on a parcel with an accompanying report. This updated NRI along with online resources provided by the county continue to be a key resource as the ECB reviews parcels and development projects.

Public Education and Outreach: The ECB continues its mandate in public education and outreach to inform our residents of natural resource protection issues. 2021 continued to be a challenging year and many of our projects were postponed or cancelled. The ECB had intended to have a rain barrel booth at "Halloween at Onanda", but unfortunately that did not happen. The ECB will continue to pursue a rain barrel project for the public in 2022. The ECB has also reached out to the Ecology department at Canandaigua Academy and will be working on a partnership with Canandaigua students to help us identify and eradicate invasive species, starting with the Tree of Heaven located at the Sandhill Cemetery. Most of our educational outreach has been passive outreach through the ECB page on the Town website. Many thanks to Gary Korkersburger, Kim Burkhard and others for developing a page that is visually pleasing and full of tremendous resources.

Strategy 1 – Encourage land stewardship by landowners.

The ECB was excited for the opening of the Vista project and continues to support community partnerships to preserve open space. The board has been working on a list of “appropriate native species” that homeowners and developers can access as they plant on their property.

Strategy 2 – Enhance wildlife habitat.

The invasive gypsy moth caused extensive damage in both 2020 and 2021. In early 2021, the ECB suggested mitigation measures to the Town Board which included aerial spraying of trees in Onanda Park. The timing of the spraying was critical in order to control the species reproduction and spread. Trees were sprayed in the summer of 2021. Post aerial surveys determined that the Onanda infestation was mitigated successfully. Additionally, many residents chose to have their properties sprayed.

Strategy 3 – Conserve open space through land use regulations.

We continue to review stream corridor, steep slope, lakeshore and other regulations pertaining to open space protection as they appear on site plan review; develop recommendations to the Ordinance Committee and other boards regarding natural resource protections. The ECB was happy to support the new Viewshed Regulations and looks forward to working with the Ordinance Committee as this code is enhanced.

Strategy 4 – Acquire land and/or conservation easements for land with exceptional conservation value.

In August 2021, the updated conservation subdivision regulations were approved by the Town Board. The ECB reviewed myriad drafts and is supportive of the protection measures in the new law. One of the subdivision applications reviewed by the ECB was Morrell’s Pierce Brook community which will incorporate a trail network, under conservation easement, for use by the public.

Strategy 5 – Increase understanding among government officials and the general public about the benefits of open space.

The 2021 Comprehensive Plan updates reflect the Town’s support of the conservation and maintenance of land that provides critical open space. Members of the ECB were integral in the development of the Plan updates and look forward to the execution of the plan. Additionally, in the 2022 strategic planning session, the top 5 goals for the new year include the following which the ECB is committed to furthering;

- *Permanently protect lands with natural resource significance and support recreation on protected lands.*
- *Promote housing and development growth within identified growth nodes and discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas.*
- *Encourage continued agricultural use of viable farmland and discourage development of those parcels by directing developers to more appropriate locations within the Town such as the three identified growth nodes.*

ECB Involvement: ECB members continue to serve on other committees in the Town to ensure that the intent of the many resource protection policies in the Town will be represented. ECB members have committed to serving the Town on: the Citizens Implementation Committee (CIC), the Planning Review Committee (PRC),

the Local History Team, and the Tree Team . This year the ECB was facilitated by a Town Board member added the Town Historian as a full member of the committee.

Our members share their experience and information with each other at every meeting. This exchange enables the ECB to be aware of critical issues that may have environmental consequences. In addition to our outreach and public education efforts, the ECB continues to provide articles to the Town's monthly newsletter with topical/seasonal environmental content. We also provide content on the Town's Mailchimp, Facebook, other media, and our own Board page on the Town website.

2021 was a year of transition for the ECB as long-time Chair Joyce Marthaller finished her service to the board, and Town Board member Jared Simpson took over as facilitator. The ECB has worked to create a new document, which they have shared with the Ordinance Committee, which will update its structure going forward. The ECB looks forward to working with the Ordinance Committee and the Town Board to implement these exciting changes for the ECB.

Proposed ECB Projects for 2022: The following projects and others are being considered by the ECB and will be submitted to the Town Board for approval in January 2022: Rain Barrel Workshop;; Invasive Species, Arbor Day Ceremonial planting.

Respectfully submitted,

Jared Simpson, Facilitator

Environmental Conservation Board
Town of Canandaigua