

Town of Canandaigua

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Established 1789

February 27, 2015

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
6274 E Avon Lima Road
Avon, NY 14414

RE: Town of Canandaigua 2014 Environmental Conservation Board Report

The Canandaigua Town Board strives to make decisions that balance the provision of needed community services and sustainable economic growth with the protection of our natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources. Our Environmental Conservation Board (ECB) is actively involved in providing recommendations and implementing strategies designed to help us meet this goal.

The enclosed 2014 Report highlights some of the activities and accomplishments of this board. This report was prepared by Mr. Kevin Reynolds, ECB Chairman and adopted by both the ECB and the Canandaigua Town Board. Should you have any questions regarding the report, please do not hesitate to contact me. My email address is phelming@townofcanandaigua.org.

Sincerely,

Pamela A. Helming,
Town Supervisor

C: K. Reynold, ECB Chair
D. Finch, Director of Development
NYS DEC Region 8

Town of Canandaigua

Environmental Conservation Board

2014 Annual Report

Purpose: Town Code (Chapter 18-6) and New York State General Municipal Law (GMU Article 12 F 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: In 2014 the Town learned that state funding would again be available for the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program. The Town worked quickly to identify interested landowners and held an informational meeting in cooperation with the Finger Lakes Land Trust to explain the program. Applications were received from seven landowners and the ECB reviewed and ranked each application. The ranking was reported to the Town Board with a recommendation to pursue as many applications as can be funded.

The Town Board reviewed the ranking and determined that they would assist the Finger Lakes Land Trust with one application and pursue two more through the Town. One Town applicant subsequently withdrew their application and with no time left to have another reviewed by the County Ag Board, no subsequent action was taken to select a replacement application.

It should be noted that the work done previously on the report *Prioritizing Farmland and Scenic Views* (2006) gave the ECB a head start on ranking the PDR applications. It should also be noted that the Town and potential applicants were given very little notice that this program would again be funded, and more importantly, that there would be new qualifications used in application review. Future changes to the application qualifications by the State should be developed with land owners and published in advance to better facilitate participation.

In 2014, the Town of Canandaigua applied for a Municipal Agricultural Protection Planning grant through the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. This grant application if awarded, would assist the Town of Canandaigua with the development and implementation of a Town of Canandaigua Farmland Enhancement and Protection Program as identified in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The program would include the creation of an inventory of ideal agricultural lands for possible protection; evaluation of the *Prioritizing Farmland and Scenic Views* document (2006); sensible planning for water and sewer line expansion; and review of existing zoning for best enhancement and protection considerations.

Open Space Index: The ECB is charged with maintaining an up to date inventory and map of lands of conservation interest in the Town. The index was mapped with other environmentally significant features in 2011 as the Natural Resources Inventory. In 2014 the ECB made no changes to the Open Space Index portion of the Natural Resources Inventory.

Open Space Index Referrals: In 2014 the Town received an application for subdivision of a parcel adjacent to one of the highest ranked scenic views listed in the Open Space Index. The ECB provided comments to the Planning Board related to mitigating negative impact to the scenic view. Planning Board review of this application was ongoing at year end.

Natural Resources Inventory: In 2012 the ECB began work to improve the mapping of stream locations in the Natural Resources Inventory. This work continued through 2014 with review of available data sources and discussion of available tools for mapping of the data.

Public Education: In 2014 the ECB continued work on several environment related public education initiatives and this work is ongoing. Pamphlet and web site information was developed on invasive species and on recycling.

Hydrofracking: In 2012 the Town Board formed a Hydrofracking Working Group that included the ECB. During 2013 The Working Group worked with outside attorneys to draft amendments to the Zoning Code to prohibit Oil and Gas Exploration and Extraction related land uses in the Town and a draft was presented to the Town Board for consideration. After careful review and public hearing, the Town Board adopted the zoning amendments in February of 2014.

Proposed projects for 2015: The ECB is considering the following projects for 2015.

1. Continue to work with the Town Board and Planning Board to develop alternatives to the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) for open space preservation.
2. Continue to establish connections with outside agencies and others with a similar mission.
3. Continue to assist the Development Office with development of the Natural Resources Inventory and Guide. Work with the Town Historian to map locations of historic significance.
4. Continue to develop environment related public education opportunities.

In addition, the Town Board in 2014 established a Citizens Implementation Committee (CIC) to develop specific action steps to achieve the goals of the Town Comprehensive Plan. It is expected that the CIC and Town Board will be referring specific action steps to the ECB in 2015.

Submitted by Kevin Reynolds, Chairman – on behalf of the Environmental Conservation Board
January 19, 2015