

Clarence Conservation Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

June 13, 2024 @ the Clarence Nature Center 7PM

Meeting called to order by Cheryl Cantlon

In attendance: Cheryl Cantlon, Chick Biegner, Barbara Maish, Steve Diver, Joel Radder, Ron Walkowiak, Casey Diederich, Lori Sauls, Bob Geiger, Paul Shear and Bob Altieri. No visitors today.

Minutes from May: no corrections, were adopted.

Financial Report

Cheryl gave an update that some amendments were made since May as \$599.58 were spent on various activities associated with the open house and other events. Currently the Council has spent \$1,153.43 of its allotted 2024 budget and has \$846.57 remaining for the year. With some larger programming already complete this should be plenty of budget for the remainder of the year.

Bob Altieri: No new updates from the Town.

Paul Shear: No new updates from the Town.

Website

Steve raised the idea of wanting to add more pictures to the website to advertise the Council's accomplishments. We could have a gallery that highlights many items, like the bluebird boxes, the boot brush installation, the tree planting event, etc. It was noted that Cheryl is managing the Council's social media accounts well, but all agreed that updates to the website would be welcome, as well as adding the Council's new logo and a link to Council projects.

Red Devil Recognition

Steve noted that he nominated Evan Vahratian of the Clarence Family Support Center for a Red Devil Recognition and it was awarded to him last night. Evan has been very helpful leading the headlamp hikes and this was a good shout out for the Council.

Tree Survey Program

Barbara gave an update that there will be a new article coming out in the Clarence Bee next week on Birch trees. She noted that she wanted to make sure to get pictures included with the articles so readers could see the trees that were being discussed; a conversation was had about where pictures should come from, and Barb will likely take pictures herself to submit with the articles to avoid any picture copyright issues.

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper – Town Park Mill Pond

Casey gave a report out on a meeting that was held at Mill Pond with Casey, Cheryl, Steve, and Joel present along with two members of Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper on June 7th. The team toured the pond and discussed potential improvements including dredging for the health of the pond and possible additional access dock for fishing. BNW representatives were going to explore options /

funding as well as requirements related to dredging so the team could decide on potential next steps.

Boot Brush Installation

On June 7th a team of Council members installed the boot brush station at the nature center trailhead off of Thompson Road. Cheryl updated WNY Prism with pictures and coordinates, and also posted the installation event to social media and sent a small report out to the Clarence Bee for inclusion in the next issue.

Beeman Creek Raptor Platforms

Steve gave an update, he had asked the Town if we had equipment to put up a pole (size of a utility pole) for raptor platforms and he was told that actually the Town has spare utility poles as well, so the Council would no longer need to ask local utility providers for poles. He is still waiting to hear from staff at Iroquois refuge regarding placement of the platforms and it was noted that we'll also need to assess where an installation crew can actually access in the park to install them. The Council will be responsible for making the platforms, they will probably cost approximately \$150 per platform, potentially cheaper depending on material used. Cheryl will be in contact with the Chautauqua Watershed Conservation team to get advice on platform installation.

Tonawanda Creek Kayak Access Project: No updates

Other Project Updates

Cheryl noted that where the Council recently planted trees off of Thompson road there is an area of shrubs that was planted that needs to be cardboarded and mulched. Lori will look into whether or not this can be done by the local Boy Scouts as a project.

New Business

- Council members are to meet with the Town parks department – now that the nature center trail ditching is complete, we need to discuss mowing to maintain and formalize paths as a new loop.
- There was a discussion regarding potentially formalizing a perimeter trail for Beeman Creek park. The idea would be to keep costs and maintenance low but provide an additional trail route not associated with the current wooded trail. There was also a discussion regarding signage for the park laying out standard ground rules for park use. At the moment the park does not have any kind of signage and it would be important, for example, to add signage noting that vehicle use is prohibited, and that hunting may be happening at the park during certain times of the year.
- There was a discussion about potentially working up a volunteer group that is in some way associated with the Council. Often at events there is interest from citizens as to how they can get more involved. It was suggested that at a minimum the Council might collect email addresses from interested individuals and put an email listserv together as a means to ask for help with various items and keep the volunteer group apprised of upcoming events. Paul Shear noted that this does not need to be formalized through the Town, and the Council can move forward with this now.

- There was a discussion regarding what properties in Clarence are available for the Council to potentially develop for recreational (e.g., hiking) purposes. Paul noted that if properties are part of the Greenprint they cannot be developed, not even recreationally. He noted there are other properties that the town owns that are undeveloped and not part of the Greenprint that would have potential, and he will look into which properties might be available for this.
- Cheryl had a conversation with Andrew Shafer, who works for Jon Bluer of the Town and he is more than happy to produce new maps for the nature center trail. This led to a discussion regarding uniform trail markers to potentially be installed along all trails, and what these markers might look like.
- The council discussed adopting a 2nd Council logo that removes the words “Advisory Council” from the current logo that contains the full Council name “Clarence Conservation Advisory Council” – the idea being that this 2nd logo could be used more easily for branding opportunities around town as it will have the same design as the current logo but will just say “Clarence Conservation.” All agreed that this was a great idea, but a small amount of money (approximately \$75) would be needed for the company that helped design the first logo to remove those word (minimum charge). A motion was raised and passed to approve use of Council funds towards this effort.

Next Meeting will be on July 11th at the Nature Center.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM