



Minutes Volunteer Committee: Wildlife Habitat, Land and Agriculture Preservation, and Flood Mitigation, August 10, 2020, Copake Town Hall

Present: Roberta Roll (PAC Chair), Kathy Friedman, Alan Friedman (PAC), Catherine Kaputa, Ann Hanna, Elayne Dix, Lois Lovisolo, Scott Harris, Laurie Gross, Joe Gross, Charles Schade.

Participants introduced themselves and said where they resided. They all expressed a love of Copake and the desire to keep informed, as well as the desire to see Copake grow sustainably.

- Discussion was had about which areas of Copake have flooding problems. 1. Along the Bash Bish Brook in the Hamlet of Copake, from the north entrance to the hamlet, along Main St. to the clock, and then continuing along 7A down toward Rt. 22. We discussed simple ways of creating berms from composting and plantings such as willows. Roberta will visit Kathy and Alan Friedman's home to see how they did this. They were able to mitigate the flooding completely (to date). How can we get this kind of action going for the other homeowners who are impacted by the brook? Several years ago, the Town received approximately \$160,000 to remediate the brook along the north entrance to the hamlet. The remediation was not completed due to DEC decisions. Some shrubs were planted. A walking/biking path could be developed along this area - this is the area that has been discussed for a spur from the Harlem Valley Rail Trail. This land is also part of a large dairy farm; flooding impacts the farmland.
- Recommendation to investigate and determine the feasibility of a walking trail along the Bash Bish from Copake hamlet to Copake Falls.
- Development of the hamlet - flooding issues affecting septic and water.
- Roe Jan Kill areas. The Roe Jan flows through Robinson Pond. The dam has undergone a long period of repair, so the pond has been drained. In normal summers, the water level is often quite low by mid to late summer.
- Kayaking and fishing from Twin Bridges. During the summer, there is hardly any water there. Also, there is frequent shooting and hunting. It was decided that the Twin Bridges area would probably not be suitable for a plan project.
- Wildlife habitat. As we develop walkways and small park areas, we could prioritize the planting of shrubs and plants for butterflies, insects, birds, and ground animals. Wildlife educators and ecologists could then lead walks and educational talks for the public, schoolchildren, and special groups. Master birdwatchers and other students of wildlife and ecology often must do projects; leading walks and programs could qualify.