

Peekskill Conservation Advisory Council April 2025 Meeting

April 10th, 2025 6:30 p.m.

Admin:

- Call to Order
- Attendance (Taken from Zoom Participants List): Janine Melillo, Courtney Williams, Deborah Bliss, Lise Prown, Emma Kaminski (CEEP), Sarah Aparicio, Kay Barthelmes, Dwight Douglas, Elaine Caccoma, Dana Freedonfield, Emily Neye, Shannon Hui
- March 2025 minutes Approved
- In need of three new members and a secretary!

Guest Speaker: Emily Neye (emily@newcityparks.org) and Shannon Hui (shannon@newcityparks.org) from New City Parks on the subject of the Depew Park Revitalization Project

- New City Parks: a nonprofit working with small cities to build revitalize parks in underserved communities, a free service that provides design and engineering services, financing search, stewardship, and programming for parks.
- Most Depew park rec facilities are in poor shape, pedestrian and vehicle paths are combined
- NCP and Peekskill are working with Saratoga Associates to put together a master plan focused on improving what is already there, has been in the works for approx a year. The city is going to procure another design firm to create construction drawings. Furnishings are not yet specified, there is room now to choose them carefully and look at recycled materials.
- December 2024: awarded 675k state parks grant and the city has matching funds (total secured funds is about \$1.5 mil)
- Hoping to raise an additional million for other park improvements and overhaul of the pool complex. Pool upgrades are a separate project which NCP are also working on
- PLANNED UPGRADES: The current \$1.5 mil will fund replacing tennis courts, adding a pavilion, adding a pedestrian path through the courts, improving grading for better drainage, resurfacing basketball courts, and additional pedestrian path along robin drive.
- Additional improvements which would be pursued if there is additional funding would include further foot paths, picnic area revamp
- PLAYGROUND SURFACING: Upgraded playground surfacing is a part of a separate city grant to improve multiple playgrounds which will include placing new safety surfacing. NCP is looking into other alternatives to the planned poured rubber surfacing. Loose mulch is not a strong option as it is very difficult to maintain and will fall out of order quickly, which will not make it an effective safety surface. Corkeem surfacing is a strong potential alternative which they are pursuing and bringing up to the city.
- TRAIL UPGRADES: This summer, they will be working with NY-NJ trail conference who will remap the trail system of Depew Park, figure out what needs to be retired, what needs to be reworked, any loops added, new kiosks, and signage. This summer they are starting this work on just the core loop trail. Improvement will begin Next summer on the rest of the trails.

- COMMENT: Poured rubber surfaces are a problem because they continuously leach into the ground/groundwater. The playground is overtop multiple water systems.
- COMMENT: Will the pavilion have electric? Would be good to have a projector screen and speakers. ANSWER: There should be a power supply a the pavilion
- COMMENT: Will renovations include trash cans, or waste centers, a solution to the current garbage problem? Suggestion- A clean up day would be a great event to bring to depew with the help of summer volunteers
- COMMENT: What is the planned Mountain biking policy for Depew Park? They can often tear up understory and go off trail causing erosion. ANSWER: Additional signage will help address this problem, they will still be welcome to use the trails.
- COMMENT: Does part of your work include ecosystems study? Are there parts of the park that it would be better to leave off limits? ANSWER: No not specifically, they can include some interpretive signage and educational signage.
- COMMENT: The tree inventory and management plan will be used to determine tree work at Depew Park, they will be adding trees, removing any dead or hazardous trees.

Ongoing Projects

[Ongoing Projects Spreadsheet](#)

Ribbon Cutting Event

- [All relevant docs](#) can be found here
- [Press Release](#) feel free to edit *IN SUGGESTING MODE PLEASE*
- Confirmed date is Friday April 25th 10:00 a.m. Location is 100 lower south street
- Media Alert and invites will go out on Friday 04/18. The press release will go out with photos after the event.
- City already has scissors, and Jan is getting the ribbon :)
- Setup crew: Dana, Jan, Kay
- NEEDS:
 - Microphone system (Dwight will locate this)
 - Banner (Kay is bringing the CAC banner)
 - Podium (Dwight will inquire about this)
 - Photography (Courtney's husband can photograph)
- INVITE LIST: Send an email invitation to invitees alongside the media alert
 - add names to the [invite list here](#)
 - Invite Peter McCart from Westchester County (Courtney will share the contact info)
 - Invite Anthony who picks up the food scraps (kay will send the info)
- THANK YOU LIST: Need a list of everyone who should be thanked. And to designate one speaker to say these thank yous.
 - Add to the [thank you list here](#)
- There is a social media flyer created by lise

- City website needs an update for the links on food scraps page, jan will bring this back up with steph
- Spanish speaker staff in parks and rec can help with a translation for any PCAC docs needing translation. Deborah will reach out to her for a translation on a few docs
- Courtney suggests a facebook livestream. Lise can do this.

Arbor Day Event

- There will be a meeting next week with Peter and Eocene on April 15th at 11:00 about the tree inventory and the April 26th event
- Wanting to have people do it themselves not just watch DPW do it
- Emma will reach out to Peter about the plans for the tree planting. Ask Peter about the flyer and the outline for the day. (all set)
- April 26th parks cleanup event is 8:00-11:30; the planting workshop starts directly after this
- Coned gave 300 saplings, they will drop these off to Lise next week.
- Attaching a planting guide to the saplings. We have a tree flyer on why trees are good which will be available on the CAC table at the event. Sending planting guide to Stephanie for the city to print.
- Is composting being tracked? That would be great to know and create a visual for. Anthony Carbone is the only source we know of who may have an answer.

CEEP

- CVAAP is on the city website climate webpage, please read and comment if you haven't already
- CVAAP was presented at the April 7th Council of the Whole meeting and will be seeking adoption through a resolution soon.
- A Metal sign for the new food scraps site will be sent to the printer's on Monday April 14th. Hoping to have sign installed before the ribbon cutting ceremony
- Add edits and comments to the [signage HERE](#) . All comments due by Monday morning.

Tree Ordinance, Tree Board, Tree plantings

- The city will be hiring a private contractor to manage landscaping, which should mean MORE tree plantings. CAC will need to remain involved, and to make sure the inventory is given to the landscaper, and whoever is making plans. Next thing needed is a very aggressive tree planting plan and set of recommendations.
- Inventory begins May 5th
- After completion of the inventory, sit down with the city manager and DPW
- What's the legality of enforcing tree plantings or maintenance on private property?

Meeting on Lake Mitchell with Jonathan zamora

- Jan will compose a list of questions for Jon Neering and cc the meeting attendees; primarily looking to confirm a way of maintaining the lake that doesn't involve chemical treatment
- There's a longtime table, the permanent work of dredging and building of the dam isn't until 2026
- 2 people on the parks board are getting trained to do water testing. CAC hopes to also get this data on the water quality, and use it to inform Lake Mitchell treatment recommendations.
- Parks meeting is Tuesday at 6:30 in person at depew rec facility. Message Deb if you would like to go!

Tabling

[Tabling at Community Events](#)

-Kay will be a PHS earth day

-No tabling opportunity at the cherry blossom festival

-Garden club event on saturday, they would like to promote the food scraps program. Kay will go if anyone wants to join- message her!

Upcoming Events

WASS Monthly Wednesday Meetings

PHS Earth Day

Garden Club Event Saturday April 12

Ribbon cutting at DPW April 25th, 10 am

Parks Clean Up and Arbor Day celebration April 26th