

Peekskill Conservation Advisory Council - Meeting Notes

Date: 09/11/2025

Attendees: Kimberly Easlick, Deborah Bliss, Elaine Caccoma, Lise Prown, Sarah Aparicio, Kay Barthelmes, Dana Freedenfeld, Jannelle

1. CAC Member Recruitment

- **Summary:** Sarah discussed strategies for recruiting BIPOC community members, young people, Spanish speakers, and conservation-minded individuals through website updates, social media, and community engagement. Ideas included improving online content and visuals, creating an onboarding toolkit, hosting family-friendly events, and emphasizing relationship building as a core part of recruitment and retention. The slide deck can be found [here](#).
- **Next steps:**
 - Lise to share social media account login information
 - Dana to share pictures from previous events
 - Kay to reach out to Youth Bureau about events for (16-25 yo)

2. Tree Board

- **Update:** Deb attended a council meeting where public comments were taken on the formation of a Tree Board, which received broad community support. The proposed board will meet quarterly and include one seat designated for a CAC member.
- **Next step:** Confirm when they will vote on tree board

3. Tree City USA Recognition

- **Update:** CEEP is currently working on an application. Need to submit proof of Arbor Day celebration.
- **Next step:** Deb to send Arbor Day pictures to Kim

4. Tree Inventory

- **Update:** The tree inventory has been completed with data collected for 2,373 trees and is awaiting final approval from DEC forester Amy Mackenzie. Data analysis and report drafting are underway, with a summary one-pager to be shared soon, and a resident survey is currently open for public input on Peekskill's trees.

- **Next steps:**
 - Promote the survey! I've attached a copy of the flyer, which can be printed out and shared with people or posted around Peekskill. If you send out any digital communications, the survey's website is: <https://forms.office.com/r/FtQSdf9t69>. There are 83 responses so far, so more is needed.
 - We need to schedule a community workshop to talk about the inventory results and further promote the survey. I want to keep Sam and Janelle involved in that process, but if you and the CAC have any suggestions on where, when, and how to share the information, that is most appreciated.

5. Waterfront Development Open House

- **Update:** Dana and Sarah attended the Waterfront Development Open House, where community members explored interactive displays of architectural plans and design elements that align with the city's character. The CAC's role would focus on advocating for sustainable features in the proposed hotel, such as solar power.
- **Discussion points to be resolved in future conversations:**
 - Where is the money from the land sales going to?
 - What are the plumbing considerations?
 - How does the height of the towers impact the environment?
 - How can we track upcoming meetings on this development?

6. Pollinator Garden

- **Update:** Project in progress. Lise is working on signage.