

# Peekskill Conservation Advisory Council - Meeting Notes

**Date:** 12/11/2025

**Attendees:** Janine Melillo, Kimberly Easlick, Deborah Bliss, Lise Prown, Sarah Aparicio, Kay Barthelmes, Elaine Caccoma

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## 1. 2026 priorities and planning

- **Update:** List of initiatives available [here](#). Proposed prioritizing climate change initiatives and the comprehensive city plan. Open to comment before the January meeting.
  - Climate change initiatives: Second food scrap drop-off site needed, possibly at the community building due to library move. Develop a garbage/waste management solution to prevent misuse of scrap bins and general garbage issues in Peekskill. Future ideas include:
    - Reviewing other municipalities models, such as NYC.
    - Assess impact of garbage on tourism.
    - Assess the need for code officers.
    - Bring the issue to the Quality of Life Committee.
    - Collaborate with groups and co-present at Common Council meetings (e.g., Peekskill Walks).
    - Evaluate options for community dumpsters and other solutions.
  - Comprehensive city plan: Take a larger role in advocating for sustainable practices in upcoming developments (including library projects and waterfront development). There is a training need for members who want to confidently represent CAC at meetings.
- **Next step:** Members review initiatives and comment to indicate priorities.

## 2. 2025 Annual Report

- **Summary:** Jan to write Annual Report to highlight 2025 initiatives and accomplishments.
- **Next step:** Members update the accomplishment column [here](#).

## 3. Upcoming events and community engagement

- **Summary:** Reminder about Garden Walk and Full Moon Walk events. Planning needed for Mycoblitz. Discussed future event idea modeled off of

Owl Prowl event at Muscoot Farm that would be held in Depew Park in the spring/summer.

- **Next step:** Deb to look into logistics of Owl Prowl event.

#### 4. Tree board

- **Update:** First meeting has been confirmed for January 6th. Lise will be attending as CAC representative. Agenda items include status of tree inventory and access, and clarifying available budget lines. Members expressed the need for a long-term DPW representative, which is essential for proper functioning of the board.
- **Next step:** Confirm with Matt that the DPW representative will have a board seat.

#### 5. Recruitment and outreach

- **Update:** Jan scheduling interviews with prospective members. Girl Scout collaboration is scheduled for seed-planting sessions and discussion on monarchs and native plants.
- **Next steps:**
  - Jan and Sarah plan to meet to review the recruitment flyer and survey.
  - Develop HOA presentation. Topics to highlight expanding food scrap program, monarch gardens, and native plant gardens.
  - Create a list of HOAs in the area.

#### 6. Ongoing projects

- **Teachers Park:** Kay to prepare a document of the history, issues, and solutions of the park. Document will be shared with Dwight.
- **Lake Mitchell:** Lake remains healthy despite phragmites. We still need a full report and to check the Blue Mountain project (as a model).
  - **Next step:** Kim requested a draft report and Deb to follow up.
- **Depew Park renovations:** Firms submitted bids for Phase 1. Community feedback opportunities will be shared in the future.
  - **Next step:** Confirm playground resurfacing will use sustainable materials.