

Conservation Advisory Council Town of Hillsdale, NY

David Lewis, Chair
Amy Davidsen
Mary King
Gretchen Stevens
(open position)

MINUTES CAC MEETING, 11 JUNE 2026

The meeting was convened at 7:00pm at the Hillsdale Town Hall. All members were present (Amy by phone). Jamie Carano Nordenstrom (Town Board liaison) was absent.

Approval of Minutes

The May minutes were approved with edits from Amy.

Old Business

CAC Open Position

Gretchen sent a memo to the Town Board recommending Ed Frederick for the open CAC position, and urging the board to consider the appointment at their regular June meeting.

Culverts

Gretchen will set up a meeting with Mike Dvorchak and Richard Briggs to discuss whether to go after a WQIP grant for culvert replacement.

Hillsdale Town Newsletter

The rat poison article was approved with David's edit. Gretchen will submit it for the July town newsletter.

Sponsor *The Extraordinary Caterpillar* Film

The person who wants to screen the film at the library hopes to advertise it especially to gardeners. A screening in the fall is most likely.

Paving

Amy reported that the town has now added asphalt to certain parts of Texas Hill Rd. She does not know why.

Planning Board

Gretchen reported on the Planning Board's consideration of the proposed house and driveway on the Knapp/Malloy parcel at 620 Whippoorwill Rd.

Comprehensive Plan

We expect that the Town Board will appoint the preliminary Comprehensive Plan Committee at their regular meeting in June. The committee's main task is to prepare and post an RFP for a planning consultant to assist with the project.

Farm Inventory

Amy discussed the farm inventory list and the agricultural exemptions list with Rene Gibson, and will also send them to Sally Laing. The CAC should review the exemptions list to see if any additional farms should be added to the inventory.

Garbage Receptacle Law

The CAC should review the draft memo and sample legislation that Amy shared.

Open Space Plan

Gretchen will send an as-is draft of the Open Space Plan to the CAC.

Storage of Flammable and Toxic Materials

Amy has learned that businesses that store hazardous materials are meant to report their holdings to the state. Amy will talk to Nico about the Hillsdale Fire Company's policy for learning about where flammable and toxic materials are stored.

New Business

The CAC will review the draft local law governing how development projects are initiated with the town. At the June Town Board, the board will consider whether to hold a public hearing. The CAC will send a memo to the board expressing our concern about adding a large new task to the responsibilities of the already-overburdened Code Enforcement Officer.

Mary has drafted a memo urging the Hillsdale Town Board to endorse the elimination of the use of herbicides to control roadside vegetation along state roads. The Columbia County Environmental Management Council hopes to obtain such endorsements from many towns, and then from the county Board of Supervisors.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22pm.

(see over)

Action Items

Amy:

- Check about screening of The Extraordinary Caterpillar
- Talk to Nico about existing policy on reporting storage of hazardous materials to the fire company.

Gretchen:

- Submit article for July town newsletter
- Send to CAC the current draft of Open Space Plan
- (carried over) Meet with Richard and Mike about applying for a WQIP grant for culvert replacement in the 2026 round
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All:

- Review the draft local law for project initiation
- Review the agricultural exemption list and farm inventory list
- Recruit new members of the Open Space Committee
- Review the draft memo and sample legislation for a garbage receptacle law
- (carried over) Scan Comprehensive Plans from other towns and consider the kinds of format and content suitable for Hillsdale's revised Plan.
- (carried over) Consider the kinds of elements that should be included in an RFP for Comprehensive Plan consultants.