

**Minutes of the EMC**

**Date:** July 14, 2016  
**Time:** 4:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Old Jail Conference Room, 125 E. Court St.

*Attendees:*

Name		Representation	
Steve Bissen	P	Town of Dryden	
Kenny Christianson	P	At-Large	
John Dennis	E	Village of Lansing	
Brian Eden	P	Village of Cayuga Heights	
Bill Evans	P	Town of Danby	
Pegi Ficken	E	Town of Groton	
John Hertzler	P	Town of Ulysses	
Roy Luft	P	At-Large	
Jim McGarry	E	At-Large	
Vladimir Micic	A	Town of Ithaca	
Steve Nicholson	P	Town of Caroline	10
Susan Riley	P	At-Large	11
Tom Shelley	P	Ithaca CAC	12
			13

Name		Representation
Linda Spielman	A	Village of Dryden
Ron Szymanski	A	Village of Freeville
Roger Yonkin	A	At-Large
<i>Dooley Kiefer</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Jose Lozano</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Scott Doyle</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>EMC Coordinator</i>
<i>Dan Klein</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Associate Member</i>
<i>Anna Kelles</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Legislature Liaison</i>
<i>Pam Pariso</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Planning Staff</i>

**Guests in Attendance:** Kristin Gutenberger, Cornell Real Estate; Jamie Cone, Ithaca Times.

**Call to Order**– The meeting was called to order by Steve Nicholson at 4:10 pm.

**Privilege of Floor** – Kristin Gutenberger spoke from Cornell Real Estate asked the EMC to defer a vote on the Sapsucker Woods UNA until they’ve had time to review it with their consultant. She indicated that they just received the materials last week, and their consultant was on vacation, so they’re asking for more time to evaluate it before a vote.

**Changes to the Agenda** – No changes.

**Approval of Minutes** –May 12<sup>th</sup> Minutes were discussed. Only one change: Roy Luft was present. All were in favor. June 9<sup>th</sup> Minutes were approved with no revisions. All were in favor.

**Committee Reports and Member Questions:**

- A. Energy** – Brian spoke about a variety of energy topics. Heat Smart Solar Tompkins is rolling out a new program in 2016 and hopes to double its enrollment next year. •
- Maplewood Redevelopment plans to support passive house performance standards. •
- NYSEG issued its planning document on how they’re going to support the grid. •

1 NYSEG's Energy Smart Community has several initiatives, such as advanced meter  
2 systems. NYSEG is installing 12,000 smart meters, some locally. • Newfield is  
3 considering an updated wind ordinance. • West Dryden pipeline alternatives are being  
4 discussed. • March for Clean Energy Revolution is taking place with bussing to the event.  
5 • Green energy incentive program is being presented soon at the Legislature Chambers. •  
6 Ithaca is the 16<sup>th</sup> city in the nation to join the 2030 District Rollout. So far, it's the only  
7 city in NYS so far, and the smallest city in the USA to join. • Electric battery storage is  
8 needed locally, like what Los Angeles, CA, is doing now. • Deep Water Wind is putting  
9 in off-shore wind turbines off Montauk, Long Island.

10  
11 There was a discussion on NYSEG's smart meters. There are civil liberty privacy  
12 concerns. Can you opt out or in? Are they accurate in giving credit?  
13

14 **B. Environmental Review** – John Dennis was excused, so Brian gave the report. Bill Evans  
15 was thanked for attending the Maplewood Redevelopment meeting specifically to discuss  
16 the impacts of lighting on wildlife. • Brian completed the Environmental Review annual  
17 report for 2015 and turned it in to Pam to be included in the EMC 2015 Annual Report. •  
18 Dan Klein was asked about the Town of Danby Groundwater protection law, but he  
19 reported that he's not directly involved and a public hearing was held.  
20

21 **C. Unique Natural Areas** – Steve N. reported that a consultant investigating Bell Station to  
22 see if it qualifies as a UNA, found promising evidence on a recent hike. The consultant  
23 found a large population of *Jeffersonia diphylla*, twinleaf or butterfly-leaf flower, which  
24 is a NYS threatened species. It's the only natural population in Tompkins County with  
25 some 1,000 plants in pristine undisturbed habitat near a half mile of undisturbed lakefront  
26 property.  
27

28 **D. Executive** – Nothing to report.  
29

30 **Staff Report** – Scott has been attending meetings on energy-related municipal projects,  
31 including an informational solar and municipalities event held in Dryden. He emphasized the  
32 importance of balancing landowner protection with the need to implement energy systems.  
33

34 **Boundary Revision for UNA-106:**

35 **Discussion: Steve Nicholson** – The UNA-106 map (attached) was presented on the projector.  
36 Steve N. said this boundary revision has been researched and discussed since 2012. Revisions  
37 were discussed during that time. The area for this UNA revision -- the Western Lobe -- is about  
38 30 acres. Wetland mapping with aerial imaging combined with GIS mapping have helped refine  
39 the proposed boundary revision, along with onsite verification.  
40

41 Steve N. introduced the Resolution to Amend UNA-106 Sapsucker Woods as chair of the EMC.  
42 Ken Christianson seconded its introduction.  
43

44 There was a discussion about the boundary revisions. Looking at the map, the original boundary  
45 was the green line, and the yellow line is the new proposed line. Scott stated that it was the  
46 position of the Tompkins County Planning Department that the EMC should wait on voting on

1 this revision as a professional courtesy to Cornell University to allow them adequate time to  
2 review the proposed change.

3  
4 Guest Kristin Gutenberger from Cornell Real Estate again addressed the group. She said Cornell  
5 is requesting more time to review the decision regarding the 2010 boundary west. Anything east  
6 of that boundary is not under question. Anything west of that boundary is zoned business and  
7 technology and they are interested in at some point developing it for that purpose.

8  
9 Steve N. reminded the EMC that the UNA committee is appointed by the County to make  
10 environmental decisions regardless of landowners' future plans. UNAs and their boundaries are  
11 based solely on the science of environmental protection. Brian said the UNA committee has  
12 worked long and hard on a shoestring for this UNA revision, and he'd like to see a resolution  
13 soon, as investigating this has consumed considerable time and resources.

14  
15 Steve B. made a motion to table the vote until the September 8 meeting. Bill Evans seconded. No  
16 further discussion. Eight voted yes. Steve N. voted no. Brian abstained.

### 17 18 **Presentation – Tompkins County Natural Infrastructure Capital Program**

19 Scott Doyle gave a presentation on the Tompkins County Natural Infrastructure Program, which  
20 is a cost-effective approach to protecting water quality and flood resilience while enhancing and  
21 protecting natural systems. Scott reviewed flood damage costs associated with parts of the  
22 county like Ludlowville and outlined sediment reduction strategies, with a focus on water quality  
23 and natural system protection.

24 The Green Infrastructure Program is a proposed comprehensive program to mitigate flood  
25 hazards and help preserve watershed conservation. Its focus is on protecting and enhancing upper  
26 watershed areas, stream corridors, floodplains and aquifer recharge areas. This five-year program  
27 will run from 2017-2021 and cost \$200K year for a total of \$1 million.

28 Types of projects that might be eligible for funding with this program:

- 29 • Conservation easements on private forest lands wetlands, and stream corridors,
- 30 • Reconnecting third- and fourth-order streams to their natural floodplains,
- 31 • Restoration of stream banks and establishing stream buffers to hold sediment,
- 32 • Demonstration of innovative road ditch management techniques to County highway  
33 employees.

34 If the legislature approves this project, funding guidelines and project selection criteria will need  
35 to be established, and the EMC will be included in future discussions.

36 There was a discussion about how to best spend county money on flood prevention. Steve N.  
37 suggested encouraging landowners to allow beaver ponds to come back instead of considering  
38 them a nuisance. Dooley Kiefer wondered how the County's Stream Corridor Restoration and  
39 Flood Hazard Mitigation Program would be affected by this proposed program. Scott indicated  
40 that this program would absorb the Stream program. Dan Klein asked who's responsible for  
41 conservation easements and their enforcement. Scott said it has yet to be determined how  
42 easements would be monitoring that may be obtained through this program, though its an item  
43 the County would look into a range of options. Roy Luft asked if the Indian Creek Woods  
44 wetlands be considered for project funding.

1 **Municipal Reports –**

- 2 • John Hertzler asked if we will have involvement in the review of a dock proposed at  
3 Taughannock Park. Steve N. said yes, that's something this Council would likely have  
4 involvement with.  
5 • Tom Shelley gave an update on plans for the City of Ithaca's Old Library and a recent  
6 public hearing that sent developers back for added revisions.  
7 • Steve N. reported the Town of Caroline is looking into extending South Hill Recreational  
8 Trail to Burns Road. There's a question on who now owns land the railroad abandoned.  
9 • Steve B. said Dryden is going through a similar situation with the Varna Rail Trail.

10  
11 **Member Items –**

- 12 • Steve Bissen mentioned that Dominion Pipeline compressor station wants to increase the  
13 amount or capacity of pressure in its pipeline, which could increase leaks. Scott said  
14 there's a proposed Town moratorium on utility development which will be considered by  
15 the Town of Dryden next week.  
16 • Dooley asked if anyone saw the France v. Portugal soccer finals. Event organizers left the  
17 stadium lights on overnight and moths were everywhere the next day at the game.  
18 • Dan told a joke. Q. What is a wind turbine's favorite music? A. They're BIG FANS of  
19 heavy metal.

20  
21 No meeting in August. Next meeting is September 8.

22  
23 **Adjournment --** The meeting adjourned at 5:40 PM.

24  
25 Respectfully submitted,

26  
27 Pamela Pariso, Administrative Assistant  
28 Tompkins County Planning Department  
29 Approved by Council on October 13, 2016