

Town of Clinton Conservation Advisory Council (CAC)

clintoncac.com

**Meeting Location: Top floor of Masonic Hall at the Town Complex,
1215 Centre Road, Rhinebeck, NY
Minutes – April 16, 2026 – 5:00pm**

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM.

Attendees: CAC Members: Michael Hurd, Barbara Mansell, Jean McAvoy, Joe Phelan, Margaret Pierpont, Nick Sacerdote, Deborah Valchar, **Town Board Liaison:** Katherine Mustello, **Planning Board Chair:** Paul Thomas

The meeting began with a discussion of Governor Hochul’s proposal to make significant changes to the **State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA)**, the aim of which is to make it easier to build affordable housing in and around cities by expediting the approval and permitting process. One concern is that if a property has been previously disturbed, for example, an existing airstrip or land that has existing buildings that may be on a contaminated site, then a SEQRA review would not occur, no matter how large the property or how significant the environmental concerns may be. Another concern is that the Town of Clinton, home to 4,300 residents, will be treated the same as New York City with 9,000,000 residents. The proposal fails to note the unique needs of different municipalities. However, the Town’s Zoning Laws do take precedent over new laws at the NYS level.

Six Sense SEQRA Public Hearing– Michael submitted a letter on behalf of the CAC to the Planning Board after much discussion with the CAC team. Michael read the letter at the hearing on April 7, 2026. A positive SEQRA decision will be decided at the May 29, 2026 PB meeting.

Review and Approve Minutes – A motion to approve the March 11, 2026 minutes was made by Michael Hurd. Nick Sacerdote seconded the motion. All were in favor. Minutes approved.

CAC A8090.4	Amount	Spent	Remaining
2026 Budget	\$3,400	(\$539.75)	\$2860.25

Town Jurisdictional Wetlands 12a Map

The group suggested that the town’s GIS mapping tool be made available to Jeff Newman to use as an online measurement tool for the map. This would mean obtaining the original shape files for the map from Cornell Cooperative Extension.

National Wildlife Federation’s Mayors’ Monarch Pledge

Email received from Katherine and forwarded to the group before the meeting. The pledge asks that our town join a coalition of local leaders across North America working to protect the monarch butterfly for generations to come. If the town were to take the pledge, it must complete 3 action items. The group felt its time would be better spent focusing on the town’s Pollinator gardens at Fran Mark Park, the Town Hall, and in the Nature Trail, instead of taking the pledge.

Comprehensive Plan Committee – Michael

Deborah put Michael in touch with Sarah at Minuteman Express in Red Hook for the list of town addresses. Michael also requested the photo from the front page of our CAC website in high pixel format for the town survey postcard to residents. Committee will have a table at the Library’s Plant and Bake Sale.

CAC/CSC Website (www.clintoncac.com) – Ray and Barbara Mansell

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The [Events](#) page has been updated.

Norene Coller Nature Trail Event Preparations – Jean, Margaret, Lynne, Barbara

Norene Coller Nature Trail dedication invitation was emailed to Bard Fetler, Norene's son, as well as to other members of Norene's family and her local friends. Barbara will lead a bird walk at 9am, which will be followed by the trail dedication at 10:15. The library offered to serve refreshments at 10:30, and the Spring Ephemerals walk will follow at 11. The library will be publicizing the event on its website and in its weekly email. Barbara contacted FastSigns to install the sign at the Trail.

Clinton Community Day (June 6, 2026) – Lynne (unable to attend the meeting)

Climate Smart Communities Task Force – Joe (Unable to attend this meeting)

Revisit Town of Clinton Conservation Advisory Council Postcards in 2027

Social Media Policy

Barbara forwarded the email received from Carol Mackin on the town's Social Media Policy to the group.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Saturday, May 2, 2026 – Norene Coller Nature Trail Event

Saturday, May 9, 2026 – Clinton Community Library Plant and Bake Sale

Saturday, June 6, 2026 – Clinton Community Day

Next CAC Meeting: May 13, 2026 @ 5:30pm

2026 Meetings: June 10; July 8; August 12; September 9; October 14; November 11 (Veteran's Day?); December 9.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Mansell