

Town of Esopus

Waterfront Advisory Board

2018 Annual Report

The Waterfront Advisory Board (WAB) had these members in 2018: Janet Bellusci, Amy Cahill, Joe Guido - ZBA Liaison, Margaret Phelan, Kathie Quick – Environ. Bd. & Town Board Liaison, Mercedes Ross, Eli Schloss, Carol Tomassetti, Dale Wolfeld & Marion Zimmer. We were without a secretary for the entire year, which added a burden to the group. Happily, it was discovered that the new Planning/ZBA secretary, Lisa Manse, will be able to step in & take our minutes! As I am leaving the WAB, Mercedes Ross has stepped up to fill the role of Chairperson for 2019. The Board currently has one vacancy.

Requests have been signed & sent to the State to consider approving updating our LWRP, & it appears we will be successful in having this okayed.

There were 6 WAB meetings during 2018, with the board reviewing 1 action for the Planning Board, & 1 action for the ZBA. These actions involved varying degrees of complexity, the KOSCO site being the most demanding. The talents & skillsets our board members bring to the table is formidable. Again, we are without a member from the Town Planning Board, whose participation with the WAB would be invaluable for our understanding items which come before us. Very often we find that reading the plans is difficult, & now that the town is without the expertise of Myles Putman, we are truly at a loss. It is hoped that having their secretary with us going forward will assist in our clarity.

The Chester program remains effective under Carol Tomassetti's leadership, winning better town funding for 2019. Request has been made for someone to be hired to cut regularly, rather than relying solely on volunteers. Rainy weather was a tremendous negative this season. There has been continued progress made, with new attack plans for cutting always being formulated. Each season differs, & teaches lessons in how to approach the growth. Chester's maintenance is also something always monitored.

We hosted spokespeople from the Maritime Museum as they worked on developing their Summer Sailing School at Freer Park. In addition, Skip Doyle spoke to us of his ideas for Kayaking Tours out of Freer Park. His requirements for storage, however, were not workable at this time. Jess Hicks made himself available to answer WAB questions about his proposal for the former KOSCO site. Diane Dintruff has also been an interested party in the workings of the WAB, and has attended several of our meetings.

Members of the WAB continued to follow developments re: Town Drinking Water Issues & Plans for our Town, as well as the Hudson River Harbor Barrier Proposals, & remain active in monitoring the process. We will continue our vigilance. Margaret attended the 10/2 Hudson River Safety, Navigation & Operations Committee meeting.

WAB participated in the annual Riverkeeper Riverfront Sweep in May, gathering garbage from our Lighthouse Park & Esopus Meadows Park areas, coordinated by Amy Cahill. It is noted that this year there was quite a lot of garbage collected & removed. Our annual presence in this event remains important for the waterfront.

The Comprehensive Plan reached a point that required our feedback & written responses, & our group was prepared to share their visions & suggestions.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Bellusci, Chairperson, Waterfront Advisory Board