



**Dutchess County  
Environmental Management Council (EMC)  
2014 ANNUAL REPORT  
Approved April 01, 2015**

**EMC Membership:**

The Dutchess County (DC) Environmental Management Council (EMC) enabling legislation provides for a total of eleven at-large seats. The current at-large appointed members of the EMC and their term expirations are listed below:

1. Stephen MacAvery, Chair     6/30/15
2. Pete Berasi                     6/30/16
3. Lalita Malik                     6/30/16
4. John DeGilio                  6/30/16
5. Victoria Kelly                 6/30/15
6. Barbara Barosa                6/30/15 (Resigned 11/2014)
7. Constance Kustas             6/30/15
8. Marsha Leed                  6/30/15
9. Bob Cohen                     6/30/15
10. Paul Quinn                    6/30/15 (Resigned 09/2014)
11. Christon Robbins             6/30/16

\*New appointments to replace the two resigned members are being reviewed by the County Legislature

**EMC At-Large Members – Value of Volunteer Hours:**

EMC at large members donated more than 800 hours of work on EMC projects that benefited Dutchess County. At a NYS rate for volunteer hours of \$26/hour, this totals an amount of more than \$20,800 donated by EMC members for their time and expertise to the county in 2014.

**Ex Officio Members:**

In addition to the eleven at-large seats, the DC EMC membership consists of six Ex-Officio members, and twenty-one Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) members, for a total of thirty-eight members. Ex-officio members include: a member of the County Legislature, the chairman of the county planning board, commissioner of public works, county attorney, chairman of the

board of directors of the Soil and Water Conservation district and the president of the Dutchess County Cooperative Extension Association. Regular participants in EMC activities are:

1. Legislative Liaison (Joel Tyner)
2. Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County (Zwylia Wojnar (Departed 10/14)/Ruth Moore - Remainder of 2014)
3. Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development (County Planning) Member (Brian Kehoe)

### **EMC Meetings:**

In 2014, the EMC held its meetings predominately on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month. In 2014, the EMC took, prepared and approved minutes for all its regular meetings, which are available on its website (<http://dutchessemc.org/>).

### **Partnership with the Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County Environment and Energy Program:**

Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County (CCEDC) is an Ex-Officio member of the EMC and actively participates with and advises the Council. The CCEDC Environment and Energy Program staff (under contract with the DC Department of Planning and Development) attended EMC meetings. CCEDC organized the CAC and EMC Roundtable Forum in February 2014 for EMC and CAC members. Due to significant cuts in the county funding to the CCEDC Environmental and Energy Program, CCEDC is not able to offer more significant support to the Council.

### **Current EMC Subcommittees and Members:**

The EMC has established Subcommittees to address issues it sees as relevant to its mission and supportive of the County Legislature and CACs. Subcommittees are formed to focus the Council's efforts on these issues. Council Members volunteer to be part of these Subcommittees. The list of active Subcommittees and Council Members participating in each follows.

- o Road Salt – V. Kelly, P. Berasi
- o Recycling – B. Cohen, L. Malik, P. Berasi, V. Kelly
- o Energy Alternatives & Renewables –L. Malik, M. Leed
- o Low Impact Development – S. MacAvery, M. Leed, P. Berasi
- o Climate Change – C. Robbins, V. Kelly

## **EMC 2014 Projects & Accomplishments:**

Road Salt Education – The overarching goal of the DC EMC's Road Salt committee is to promote the reduction of the amount of road salt used to maintain ice free surfaces without jeopardizing winter road safety. During 2014, the Road Salt committee continued its research on best management practices, specifically with regard to brine and anti-icing. There was a presentation of a GIS analysis of salt in groundwater in Dutchess County and East Fishkill. Study of the road salt dynamics in groundwater is ongoing and includes the study of the use of conventional gas and oil well brine. Our 2015 goals include the publication of a summary report analyzing the relative effectiveness of the current best management practices, including the use of brine as a means to lower the overall amount of salt used. Additional reports will explain where and why salt is distributed in the groundwater and a summary of the issue of using gas and oil well brine for road treatment. Planning will also proceed regarding additional training sessions for municipal officials on effective winter snow and ice control.

Dutchess County Recycling – The DC EMC continued to promote the reduction of waste stream going to landfills and waste to energy plants. An article was published in the Poughkeepsie Journal about metal recycling with a comprehensive table of facilities in Dutchess County. Our 2015 goals include focusing on composting and organic recycling, and supporting the CCEDC – which received a grant to conduct a feasibility study on organic recycling under the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) Cleaner, Greener Communities Program.

Energy Conservation and Renewables – DC EMC sent a letter on Solarize Dutchess to the Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development, with cc's to the County Executive, the Chairman of the Legislature and all of the legislators offering County Planning assistance to move the Solarize Dutchess program forward. A separate letter was provided to the Chairman of the Legislature with cc's to the County Executive, the Department of Public Works, County Planning and all of the legislators inquiring on the status of the County Legislature resolution to install solar panels on county buildings and whether there are other initiatives the Legislature is pursuing regarding the use of solar power on public buildings. In this letter, the EMC offered assistance to the County in support of its efforts investigate the use of solar.

Low Impact Development - During 2014, the Low Impact Development subcommittee collaborated with CCEDC to present two workshops on Green Infrastructure practices. The first workshop, "Green Infrastructure Basics", took place in March 2014. This workshop introduced the basics of green infrastructure practices to 59 attendees, the majority of which were CAC, Planning Board, and Zoning Board members. The second workshop, "Reviewing Stormwater Management in Site Design: A Guide for Planning Board Members", occurred on March 19, 2015. This workshop released a stormwater review guide for planning boards, and introduced mapping resources that are available for reviewers. This work shop was attended by 46 people from many municipalities in the county. Additional goals for 2015 include the expansion of the knowledge of Green Infrastructure practices to encourage positive growth and development within the county.

Climate Change - The goal of the committee is to promote activities that build awareness and resiliency to climate change. In 2014 Chris Robbins worked with CCE presenters of Dutchess and Orange counties at a workshop dealing with resiliency and climate change. A comprehensive document of sustainability, climate change and resiliency resources was completed and posted on the DC EMC website. For 2015, the committee will try to find a partner organization that will distribute the document of resources to municipalities and individuals.

Environmental Fair - The DC EMC has proposed that a fair be held in 2015 that will be sponsored by DC EMC with the aid of other agencies, potentially including Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County and/or County Planning . The fair would consist of a series of “stations” for the public to visit that would provide information on personal and collective solutions to local environmental problems. There were several logistical issues associated with holding the Fair on The Walkway Over the Hudson landing, including the cost of liability insurance and funding, that were being addressed. In 2015 the DC EMC members will pursue various avenues of funding including: submission of a request via County Planning for a 2016 event; submission of a request by CCEDC to the County (confirmation of receipt of funding is expected in April 2015); partnership with another agency or group that could help address funding and insurance issues; or the creation of a 501c3 organization to support the Fair.

EMC Website – The website created by the Dutchess County Environmental Management Council continues to be visited by a core of interested users. In the current year the number of individuals that visited exceeded 764 people and that brings our total to over 15,786 viewers to date.

Among the pages that have been most visited include the “What’s New” Page and the “Resources” pages. Much of the recent activity on line has been to incorporate the articles in the local newspaper published by members of the EMC. History has shown that the time that the Poughkeepsie Journal keeps digital versions of articles published as part of the “My Valley” section is not always a long time. To keep sequential articles together the EMC website makes the access to each segment easy.

The record of this year’s agendas and meetings minutes on the website is complete. It has been added to those for each of the seven previous years. One of the significant values of this website is that it keeps the dialog and connection between the environmental efforts in the county’s townships (CAC’s) united as a website coordinates the sharing of efforts and projects. It is notable that the maintenance and development of this digital effort is completed entirely by volunteers with no expenditure of county funds.

#### **EMC Expenses:**

The EMC is an all-volunteer council, and there is currently no budget line item for the DC EMC in the Dutchess County Budget. While the council has received reimbursement for website hosting, it would be helpful if the Legislature would provide a small budget for administrative support, travel expenses for appointees to attend training conferences and continued website hosting. Note that most Towns in Dutchess County provide some budgetary support for their respective CAC's.

**Enabling Legislation and By-Laws:**

The enabling legislation for the DC EMC was adopted by the DC Legislature in 1972 and amended in 1989. In 2014 the DC EMC drafted revisions to this legislation and sent these updates to the Chairman of the Legislature at the end of 2014 for consideration. The draft of revisions consolidates and clarifies membership of ex-officio and Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC) members and updates the powers and duties of the EMC by eliminating participation in the no longer existent Scenic Roads Committee and updating language of the powers and duties of the EMC to incorporate currently relevant needs, resources and materials.