



**Dutchess County
Environmental Management Council (EMC)
2016 ANNUAL REPORT
Approved April 01, 2017**

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 6/30/17
2. Pete Berasi 6/30/18
3. Lalita Malik 6/30/18
4. John DeGilio 6/30/18
5. Victoria Kelly 6/30/17
6. Constance Kustas 6/30/17
7. Marsha Leed 6/30/17
8. Shannon Fatum 6/30/2018
9. Charles P May 6/30/2017
10. Gail Beverly 6/30/2017

Christon Robbins resigned in 2016

EMC At-Large Members – Value of Volunteer Hours:

EMC at large members donated more than 1500 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 \$39,000 donated by EMC members for their time and expertise to the county in 2016.

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 (Jeff Luoma)

3. Dutchess County Planning Board Members (Brad Barclay)

EMC Meetings:

In 2016, the EMC held its meetings predominately on the 4th Wednesday of each month. In 2016, the EMC prepared and approved minutes for all its regular meetings, which are available on EMC's website (<http://dutchessemc.org/>).

Partnership with 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 in 2016. CCEDC organized the CAC and EMC Roundtable Forum in February 2016 for EMC and CAC members. Due to significant cuts in the county funding to the CCEDC Environmental and Energy Program, CCEDC continues to be unable to offer more significant support to the Council.

2016 EMC Committees 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 volunteered to be part of these subcommittees. The list of active subcommittees in 2016 and Council members participating in each were:

- Road Salt – V. Kelly, P. Berasi, S. MacAvery
- Recycling, Organics Recycling & Composting – L. Malik, P. Berasi, V. Kelly, J. Luoma
- Energy Conservation & Alternative Energy – L. Malik, M. Leed, J. Luoma
- Low Impact Development / Water Quality – S. MacAvery, M. Leed, P. Berasi, C. May
- Environmental Fair/Earth Day Festival – J. DeGillio, M. Leed, L. Malik, P. Berasi, J. Luoma

EMC 2016 Projects & Accomplishments:

In 2016, under the guidance of Chris Robbins, the DC EMC completed the report **SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FLOOD RESILIENCY RESOURCES** This valuable document lists resources, including funding for communities to address the impact of a changing climate such as floods.

Recycling – The DC EMC continued to promote the reduction of waste stream going to landfills and waste to energy plants. It also has been in the process of redefining its efforts. The intent is to focus on communicating to the public sound recycling practices. The committee aims to provide instructional information to the public to serve as a guide for recycling practices to improve consistency. The goal is to improve the effectiveness of recycling programs in the County to reduce waste and minimize waste stream contamination.

A second aim of the subcommittee is to support organics recycling and composting. CCEDC is currently completing a feasibility study to assess the potential for organics recycling on a countywide scale. Such a program is contingent upon the ability to establish an anaerobic

digester at an appropriate site in the County. The EMC supported this program by providing a member to the steering committee.

Road Salt – The goal of the DC EMC's Road Salt subcommittee is to promote the reduction of road salt used to maintain ice free surfaces without jeopardizing winter road safety. The road salt committee continued work to understand and educate about road salt contamination in our environment as well as best management practices to improve the efficiency of road salt use. The committee is collaborating with the Cary Institute and the CCEDC Environment & Energy Program to develop an update to a 2010 road salt report and to hold a community forum in Fall 2017. A scientific publication is in review on the distribution of road salt in groundwater in the township of East Fishkill, which requires a well test to be done and the data made public every time a property is sold. We used the public data and GIS analysis to explain how salt is distributed in groundwater and the landscape features it is associated with. East Fishkill was highlighted in the 2010 road salt report as an example of significant salt and cost savings when the town purchased computerized salt distribution systems for its trucks. The committee met with the East Fishkill CAC and John Hickman, the East Fishkill town supervisor to discuss the project including results of a hot & cold spot analysis. Other work includes analysis of salt reduction practices and the impact of salt on streamwater.

Low Impact Development - On March 29th, 2016, EMC sponsored a forum (Planning for Green Infrastructure: What Municipal Boards Need to Know) on Low Impact Development (LID) in collaboration with the CCEDC Environment & Energy Program, the Dutchess County MS4 Coordination Committee and the Dutchess County Soil & Water Conservation District. The specific subject area was Green Infrastructure with the objective of providing an overview for municipal boards regarding considerations for their site plan reviews including integration and upkeep of green infrastructure practices. The forum presented case studies to exemplify municipal capacity, maintenance considerations, and enforcement options.

The agenda was kicked-off with an introductory presentation by Carolyn Klocker, then Sr. Water Resource Educator, CCEDC. Ms. Klocker presented an overview of the principles underlying Green Infrastructure practices, including the fundamental water cycle, impact of impervious surfaces, precipitation and stormwater runoff trends, and the fundamental practices to provide mitigation. She included a discussion of green infrastructure in contrast to grey infrastructure and its superior advantages for the ecosystem.

Following the introductory presentation, the Green Infrastructure principles were expanded upon by several guest speakers including:

- Walter Artus, Stormwater Management Consultants
- Wanda Livigni, Town of LaGrange Department of Planning & Public Works
- Eric Hollman, Town of Poughkeepsie Planner
- Jen Cavanaugh, Fuss & O'Neill, Inc.

The forum demonstrated how Green Infrastructure is capable of providing a superior development design, but has challenges unique to itself which require a carefully drafted municipal response to avoid future difficulties and unnecessary imposition of financial burdens. Municipal stakeholders who attended were highly supportive of the focus of the forum with dedication to follow the guiding principles which were identified.

Continued goal is to develop a Infrastructure Practice checklist that can be used by CAC's, Planning Boards when reviewing development proposals.

Energy Conservation & Alternative Energy - The group worked with CCEDC on several initiatives including as part of their Cleaner Greener Communities grant on the benefits of methane from anaerobic digestion as an energy source.

Earth Day / Environmental Fair - The DC EMC participated in the Poughkeepsie Earth Day Festival on April 16, 2016. The group also collaborated with the Environmental Cooperative at Vassar Barns on the 2016 Urban Wilderness Festival and Environmental Fair held on September 25, 2016. These fairs consisted of a series of “stations” for the public to visit that provided information on personal and collective solutions to local environmental problems. Plans are in place to hold a similar event in 2017.

EMC Website – The website created by the Dutchess County Environmental Management Council continues to be visited by many users. In 2016 the number of visitors exceeded 2200 people, which brings our total to over 18,000 viewers to date. The pages that have been most visited include “What’s New” and “Resources”.

The website incorporates articles in the local newspaper published by members of the EMC in addition to the year’s agendas and meeting minutes. Seven years of agendas and minutes are now on the EMC’s website. One of the significant values of this website is that it maintains a dialog and connection among the county’s CAC’s. It is notable that the maintenance and development of this digital effort is completed entirely by volunteers.

EMC Quarterly Newsletter – A newsletter of one to two pages in length was begun in 2016 and contains updates on environmental issues and articles. CACs are welcome to contribute to the quarterly newsletter. Copies of each newsletter are posted on the EMC website.

EMC Expenses:

The EMC is an all-volunteer council, there was a budget line item for \$100 for the DCEMC in the 2016 budget which covered the cost of the DCEMC web site. In 2017, there is a budget line item for \$100 for the DCEMC in the 2017 budget which again will cover the cost of the DCEMC web site. While this amount is appreciated it would be helpful if the Legislature would provide a small budget for administrative support, travel expenses for appointees to attend training conferences.

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 resent 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. Final adoption of the revised enabling language is still pending and is with the Legislatures Attorney.