

**Conservation Advisory Council
Town of Amenia
January 21, 2015**

Attendees:

Dave Reagon (Chairman)
Vicki Doyle (Town Board liaison)
Gretchen Hitselberger (Town Board liaison)
Mark Doyle
Michael Peek

Agenda:

1. Cell tower proposal in South Amenia
2. Town garage proposal
3. Gravel vs. pavement
4. Silo Ridge viewpoint
5. Landfill remediation update

1. Cell tower proposal in South Amenia:

The Amenia Historical Society received a letter of intent and invitation to comment with regard to a new cell tower proposal on the Yale property at 67 Kent Road. The proposal includes a 172' monopole, a fenced compound and an access road. The proposed tower height greatly exceeds the limits established by town code. Town code also prioritizes location of such facilities on existing structures where possible. Additional measures must be taken to minimize visual impacts. The approval process for construction of a new tower requires a special use permit from the Zoning Board and site plan approval from the Planning Board. Town code also recognizes South Amenia as a Historic Preservation Overlay (HPO) District.

2. Town garage proposal:

The Highway Dept is proposing that the town buy a half-acre parcel adjacent to the current site for construction of a new garage. The new garage would be located on the site of Richard Stern's land. Buildings would occupy almost the whole site. A hoop structure for sand and salt could then be located on the site of the old garage. Per Vicki Doyle, borings have shown there is unconsolidated organic fill below ground at the current site. The Highway Dept believes that the town owns the corner on Route 22 opposite lower Sinpatch Rd. Mark Doyle believes this site (a) is too small, (b) has a bad line of site, (c) will result in stormwater run-off onto protected farmland and (d) results in duplication of costs.

Alternatives:

- (1) Near DDSO fuel tank
- (2) Co-locate on State or County land
- (3) Stan's property on Route 22, opposite Town Hall
- (4) Amenia Firehouse land on Cascade Road

Criteria:

- (1) need enough space
- (2) cost
- (3) accessibility
- (4) buffers from creeks, neighborhoods, farmland, etc.

3. Gravel vs. Pavement

The Highway Dept is looking into paving roads where maintenance has been costly and challenging, particularly with regard to seasonal washouts. Gravel roads that are prone to washout include Deep Hollow Rd, Tower Hill Rd, Cascade Mountain Rd, Yellow City Rd, Randall Rd. We feel it's important to have a complete understanding of all associated costs, maintenance and environmental factors and to evaluate roads on a case-by-case basis. We recommend that the Town prepare a detailed report, based on historical information from the Highway Dept.

4. Silo Ridge Viewpoint

This could be an opportunity for a virtual tour using podcast technology along with a simple sign at the entrance. This project could be a positive example of inviting overlook infrastructure. There needs to be some starting point: a plan with pavement, benches, plantings, etc. Property ownership questions need to be answered. It's clearly very important to preserve the natural beauty of the viewpoint. This project needs a good plan, and there could be a good case for permeable pavers as well.

5. Landfill Remediation Update

The new park is due to open to the public in the Summer of 2015. What is the best way to convey the necessary historical and educational information for this site? Gretchen has an idea that would map various locations across the site to photographic images and use podcasting technology. For examples, she suggested we take a look at virtual campus tours for ivy league schools on the web. This approach would be very heavy on visual content, photos and videos, and easily accessed via mobile devices. It could eliminate the need for signage within the park entirely. There would only need to be some simple signage, information and maps in the parking area.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.