

TOWN OF WOODSTOCK ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

45 Comeau Drive, Woodstock, NY 12498

Susan M. Paynter, Chair
Arlene Weissman, Vice-Chair
Kenneth Panza, Secretary
Julia Blelock
Laurie Kirby
Evan Neumann
Joe Otters

The Open Meetings Law requires: Minutes of meetings of all public bodies shall be available to the public in accordance with the provisions of the freedom of information law within two weeks from the date of such meeting except that minutes taken pursuant to subdivision two of this section shall be available to the public within one week from the date of the executive session.

Minutes for the Meeting of February 18, 2026

Call to Order

A quorum being present,
WEC Vice-Chair Arlene Weissman called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

WEC Members Present

Arlene Weissman, Vice-Chair	Term: expires 12/31/2026
Julia Blelock	Term: expires 12/31/2026
Laurie Kirby	Term: expires 12/31/2026
Evan Neumann	Term: expires 12/31/2026
Joe Otters	Term: expires 12/31/2026
Kenneth Panza, Secretary	Term: expires 12/31/2026

Guests Present

Laura Ricci, Councilwoman
Town Board Liaison
Michael Veitch, Chair
Woodstock Tree Committee
Carol March, Co-Chair
Woodstock Tree Committee
Linda Lover,
Woodstock Tree Committee
Linda Setchell, Coordinator
Climate Smart Task Force

Marcel Nagele,
Woodstockers United for Change
DWSP2 Working Group
Vincent Mow,
Woodstockers United for Change
Howard Cohen, Co-Chair
Complete Streets Committee
Lizzie Vann, Bearsville Center
Climate Smart Task Force
Daniel Gallant, Deputy Supervisor

Approval of the Agenda

Agenda, as modified, approved by unanimous consent.

Consideration of Minutes

Minutes for the WEC meeting of February 4, 2026, previously updated and distributed, were approved by unanimous consent.

Correction to the Minutes of February 4, 2026

Marcel Nagele reported the previous settlement/judgement between Karolys and the DEC (6M +/-) and that it appeared Woodstock missed an opportunity to potentially receive any of those monies. And mentioned in settlements by the AG in the suit against the trucking companies, five or six settlements/judgements have been reached between 5-6 parties totaling 3.5M +/- . However, I am unaware of any monies which have been provided to any victims in either suit.

[Archive of 2026 WEC Minutes](#)

[Archive of 2025 WEC Minutes](#)

Correspondence

Request from **Laura Ricci, Town Board Liaison**, to WEC to send a letter of support for Complete Streets Committee, Hamlet-Bearsville bike and walking trail implementation TAP grant.

Marcel Nagele, Woodstockers United for Change, submitted documentation supporting comments made at WEC's February 4th meeting regarding the DEC vs Karolys Order and Judgement.

Announcements

Held a successful Repair Café on February 7th. Over 100 attendees, including volunteers; 76 items were repaired.

Invited Guest Speakers

Laura Ricci, Town Board Liaison

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant to construct a pedestrian/bike path linking the Woodstock village center and the hamlet of Bearsville

Michael Veitch, Chair, Woodstock Tree Committee

Comments about pedestrian pathway/bike trail linking the Woodstock village center and the hamlet of Bearsville

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant Request

On October 23, 2024, Lance MacMillan, P.E., NYS Department of Transportation Regional Director, wrote former supervisor Bill McKenna referencing correspondence regarding the need for active transportation facilities between the Woodstock Village Green and Bearsville.

After careful review and consideration, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) professionals will extend the current NYSDOT project limits, PIN 8122.20 Route 212 Woodstock Bridge Replacements and Complete Streets, to Bearsville to evaluate and complete preliminary engineering for an active transportation facility that would connect Woodstock Village Green to Bearsville.

The Woodstock Town Board, at its meeting of January 20, 2026, adopted RESOLUTION 62-2026, Complete Streets TAP Grant, directing Supervisor Anula Courtis, as Supervisor of the Town of Woodstock, is hereby authorized and directed to file an application for funds to the New York State Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) with a Town cash matching share of \$1,693,448. Town Board Liaison Laura Ricci, submitted a request to WEC for a letter to be sent to the Department of Transportation endorsing the TAP grant application. WEC declined to consider the request.

Objections to Woodstock Village Green–Bearsville Extension

At the WEC meeting of November 19, 2025, Michael Veitch, Chair of the Woodstock Tree Committee, presented maps obtained from Mark Kruk, P.E., Program Delivery & Priority Project Supervisor, for the Woodstock Village Green to Bearsville active transportation facility. Veitch raised several significant issues with the presented plan.

First, the plan requires removal of about 220 trees along the Route 212 corridor. Any claimed environmental benefits of the Village Green to Bearsville extension would be obliterated by the removal of these trees.

Second, the plan requires exercise of the state's authority for eminent domain to seize properties and right-of-ways to construct the bike trail/pedestrian pathway. Eminent domain has never been used in Woodstock, and its use is sure to cause significant objection from the affected property owners.

Third, there has been no public discussion or disclosure of the proposed Woodstock Village Green to Bearsville bike trail/pedestrian pathway. WEC felt the public should be included in the discussion. The recent disclosure of a required matching contribution by the town of \$1,693,448 would seem to demand public engagement.

The Complete Streets Committee assured WEC it would respond to these concerns. WEC has received no further information from Complete Streets and does not have the information necessary to offer an informed opinion on the proposed Woodstock Village Green to Bearsville extension.

Therefore, WEC declined to endorse the TAP grant application.

Alternatives to Woodstock Village Green–Bearsville Extension

An alternative presented by the Tree Committee would have a pedestrian pathway built in the utility right away on the **north side of Tinker Street**. Safety for bicyclists would be ensured by the town adopting the state's "Share the Road Program" and reducing the speed limit between Bearsville and the hamlet.

Legislator Jeff Collins reported that **UCAT (Ulster County Area Transit)** is considering extending free bus service to the new Woodstock Library, which might eliminate the need for a bike trail/pedestrian pathway from the hamlet to Bearsville. UCAT bus service has advantages over the proposed bike trail/pedestrian pathway to the library.

First, bus service would be available year round while use of a bike trail/pedestrian pathway is realistically limited to the warmer months and good weather. Second, the bus is available to those that lack the physical capacity to walk or use a bike. And, of course, you don't need to own a bicycle or a car to take advantage of the bus.

Old Business

Earth Week Preparations

Rather than a single event, a series of events sponsored by town groups and committees will be promoted as Earth Week, April 18-25.

On Thursday, February 5, 2026, Susan Paynter, wrote, “Here are the confirmed events, so far:”

- WLC will host "Watershed Wonders" at the Woodstock Library April 18 to kick off Earth Week. It's an exhibit of water-themed art that students at three local schools created, and will include an opening event set for 12-3 p.m. April 18.
- The Youth Center will be doing a litter clean up on April 25th.
- Stop Zena Development will display the six-foot banner Zoe Keller created of the Zena Woods Biodiversity drawing as a backdrop for a talk by Gretchen Stevens about the biodiversity of the CEA (date and time TBD).
- Complete Streets will offer three hikes on trails that are unknown to most of the people in Woodstock.
- Sylvia Bullet will coordinate with Evan Pritchard who will share the Iroquois creation myth and read from his new poetry book “The Silver Feather” accompanied by Dennis Yerry on native flute— (Date and Location TBD).
- Sylvia Bullet will coordinate with David Rothenberg (famous inter-species musician) author of “The Nightingales of Berlin” and “Why Birds Sing” will improvise with the birds at sunrise at a site to be determined. (I am hoping to include a birding walk to follow the music).
- Jo Schwartz working with the Plastics group will present Miss Natural and Miss Plastic and guests will sort through clothing to see whether each article would be worn by Miss Plastic or by Miss Natural.
- Matt Eshed will host a Climate Cafe where guests will share their thoughts, beliefs, and feelings about Climate Change. This is inspired by the Climate Cafe NYC (date and location TBD).

DWSP2 Implementation Plan

Final approval has not been received from the state of Woodstock’s DWSP2 implementation plan. A Zoom video conference with the DWSP2 implementation team is scheduled for March 17, and Arlene Weissman and Julia Blelock will present an overview of DWSP2 at the Land Conservancy March 14 event, “How is the Sawkill?”

Climate Smart Communities

Linda Setchell, Climate Smart Task Force Coordinator, presented a schedule for the task force to update Woodstock’s Climate Community Action Plan. The schedule is included as an attachment to these minutes.

LFA for Beaver kill in Willow

Woodstock was invited to apply for Local Flood Analysis (LFA) grant to study the Beaver Kill in Willow, an area within the Ashokan watershed.

Leslie A. Zucker, Program Manager for the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program (AWSMP), suggest meeting the afternoons of March 3, 4, or 5, to discuss the first steps in making the town eligible for SMIP funding. Here are some topics we could cover:

- 1) Adopting by resolution the Beaver Kill Stream Management Plan and establishing the town's intent to collaborate with the AWSMP on a Local Flood Analysis for Willow. I've attached draft resolution text to work from as a template. We can discuss what this resolution covers and how you might modify the resolution.
- 2) A Town resolution to establish a Flood Advisory Committee and its membership. We recommend that representatives from your Highway Department, your Floodplain Administrator, and Town Supervisor be appointed to the committee for the most successful LFA project. I've attached sample language that Shandaken just used to establish its Chichester Flood Advisory Committee. It's short and sweet, very efficient.
- 3) The LFA Scope of Services and consultant selection process. Options for consultant contract administration.
- 4) Who would be your FAC technical advisors, how meetings can be handled, and goals for a pre-application FAC meeting.

Following Tropical Storms Irene and Lee in 2011, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and West of Hudson watershed stakeholders developed a framework for funding a Flood Hazard Mitigation (FHM) Program in the NYC West of Hudson watershed. Under this initiative, DEP funds local Stream Management Program (SMP) partners and the Catskill Watershed Corporation (CWC) to support the analysis of flood conditions, the identification of hazard mitigation projects, and the implementation of community-scale projects that reduce flood hazards and impacts, protect water quality and public safety, and promote community resiliency

New Business

Saugerties Landfill Water Contamination – Evan Neumann

Evan Neumann reported that **The Overlook**, a local newspaper, published an article describing [Tracy Bouvette's experience with his contaminated water well near the closed Saugerties landfill.](#)

DEC testing showed Bouvette's well water was contaminated. The DEC has determined that dozens of households within a half mile east and southeast of the now-closed Saugerties Town Landfill had elevated levels of "forever chemicals" in their private wells. Contaminants include PFAS compounds such as PFOA and PFOS, as well as 1,4-dioxane.

In 2019, DEC began distributing bottled water to homeowners with contaminated water in the John Joy Road area. Evan Neumann receives bottled water from DEC. Today, 62 homes receive bottled water from DEC.

Tracy Bouvette has been invited to WEC's March 18th meeting to explain his understanding of the contaminated wells and DEC actions.

Large Scale Energy Zoning Moratorium – Ken Panza

Current zoning laws give preference to utility infrastructure, and for the last hundred years, what actually constituted utility infrastructure was well understood. But new technologies – solar, batteries, fuel cells, etc. – were unanticipated and have required zoning enforcement officers to make determinations about utility infrastructure without guidance from the law or governing bodies. To an extent, this happened in the towns of Ulster and Saugerties.

Also, the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, pages 37 and 38, calls for "updating the zoning laws to address all aspects of renewable energy," an action that has not been completed.

WEC discussed recommending that the town board institute a one-year moratorium on the installation and development of large scale solar, battery, and fuel cell technologies in Woodstock to allow time to update the zoning law.

On June 20, 2024, the New York Public Service Commission (PSC) issued an order ESTABLISHING UPDATED STORAGE GOAL AND DEPLOYMENT POLICY. By this Order, the commission adopted a statewide deployment goal of 6 GW of energy storage resources by 2030, with an interim goal of 1.5 GW by 2025. Governor Kathy Hochul announced approval of the PSC's nation-leading 6 gigawatts Energy Storage Roadmap.

The Woodstock Environmental Commission reviewed the PSC order and agrees the programs and recommendations contained within New York's Energy Storage Roadmap will move the State closer to reaching its climate goals. WEC recognizes the PSC order as the official document defining The New York Energy Storage Roadmap.

Yet another energy storage roadmap has been introduced by Prof. Jeffrey Seidman, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Vassar College, which seems to conflict with the approved New York State energy storage roadmap, and yet, the Vassar roadmap has been endorsed by Ulster County, Woodstock's New York Senate and Assembly representatives, Sustainable Hudson, the Mid-Hudson Chapter of the Sierra Club, among others. It's unclear why these organizations and individuals have endorsed the Vassar energy storage plan instead of the New York PSC approved plan.

A moratorium would allow a closer examination of the Vassar energy storage plan to determine if it should be accommodated in Woodstock's zoning code.

WEC asked that a letter be prepared, for consideration at its next meeting, asking the town board for authorization to prepare a one-year moratorium on large-scale energy deployments.

Public be Heard

Respectfully submitted,



Kenneth S. Panza, Secretary
Woodstock Environmental Commission

Next scheduled WEC Meeting,
Wednesday, March 4, 6:00 PM,
Comeau Great Room

Attachments

Timeline, Climate Community Action Plan

Supporting documents referenced by Marcel Nagele at the February 4th WEC meeting

Other Meeting Announcements

Attachment – Climate Community Action Plan Timeline

Presented by Linda Setchell, Coordinator, Climate Smart Task Force

February 2026

Obtain data from the town to create baseline numbers for goals

Review the numbers and updates in GHG reduction programs available to residents and draft a set of measurable goals.

Revise the Climate Community Action plan to include goals and minimize GHG inventory supporting data.

March 2026

Present goals to WEC

Present goals to Town Board

Incorporate feedback to the plan

Late March - Early April 2026

Open Public Comment on the New Plan

April 2026

Incorporate relevant feedback from the public

Early May 2026

Reshare the updated plan with WEC and Town Board for approval.

Attachment – 10 Church Rd/Shady Dump

Supporting documents referenced by Marcel Nagele at the February 4th WEC meeting

Regarding the DEC vs Karolys Order and Judgement.

Exhibit A — The DEC vs Karolys Order and Judgement. Understanding the material at 10 Church Road came from a Karolys site I believe one can easily conclude if it's a problem in Saugerties, it's

even more of a problem in Woodstock which has stricter laws, which the DEC has in fact stated in correspondence.

In these documents (page 6) it's clearly communicated which laws were violated by Karolys, and the Order and Judgement (page 8 and 9) does specifically state in part that Karolys "shall remove and lawfully dispose of all solid waste at a DEC-approved solid waste management facility, within 90 days of this Order and Judgement".

Also noted is that Karolys was to provide written notice prior to beginning waste removal. Especially noteworthy is the requirement (page 10) which requires Karolys to file a deed restriction on three properties which I believe is to prevent sale of the properties to an unsuspecting buyer due to the severity of known contamination at the sites.

To my knowledge, no similar deed restriction has been required at 10 Church Road. In fact, with the Town of Woodstock having removed the violations on the 10 Church Road property, any future buyer, especially after a length of time in which information may be forgotten, may assume all has been remedied.

Exhibit B — Communications (pages 13-16) with the NYS Attorney General. One letter is from the NYS Attorney General which I mentioned it seems as per FOIL the Town of Woodstock has not followed up with.

Exhibit C — My response regarding the NYS Attorney General letter (Page 18 and 19) with a request to take action and my offer to assist the Town of Woodstock. Noteworthy are the quoted statements of Anula Courtis.

Exhibit D — Various FOIL requests (pages 21-25) submitted as effort to confirm the Town of Woodstock had followed up with the NYS Attorney General, a follow-up which seems still has not occurred.

Exhibit E — Only five of many Order and Judgements (pages 27 - 41) filed against trucking companies which the NYS Attorney General was successful in obtaining totaling 3.5M +/- . There are many additional Order and Judgements which have been filed which add to monetary awards against the trucking companies. It appears the Town of Woodstock missed the opportunity to be a part of this action in the same manner in which it missed the opportunity to be part of the action in the DEC vs Karolys suit.

Exhibit F — My notification (page 43 and 44) to the Town Board of the contaminants in the municipal water system. I believe it's critical the Town resume quarterly testing, and urge the WEC to continually follow-up with the Town Board until quarterly testing has resumed.

Other Meeting Announcements

Saturday, March 14, 5 to 7:30 pm at Mountainview Studios, "How is the Sawkill?"

Woodstock Land Conservancy's 2026 program, "Ecologies of Water," features the book, *Drinkable Rivers* by Li An Phoa and Maarten Van Der Schaaf, that promotes awareness and action for healthy waterways through events, workshops, and citizen science, and connecting local water health to global efforts for clean, living rivers.