

Town of Caroline Community Workshop
“Protecting Caroline’s Environment and Natural Resources”
December 13th, 2018
Recommended Actions

Land

- Make sure Caroline farms use livestock runoff-best management practices—even though there aren’t large operations, even smaller operations should be encouraged to use best management practices.
 - Have a “Manure Day!” educational event
 - Approach City of Ithaca for resources — they should be proactive in protecting the watershed
- Hold a Finger Lakes Land Trust meeting in Caroline for landowners to learn about options and tax breaks. FLLT’s “Emerald Necklace” (preferred area of protection) passes through Caroline.
- Explore whether the town can provide any tax breaks for conservation easements
- Set up a framework for “neighbor-to-neighbor” conservation agreements—mutual agreements to protect land.
- Provide some sort of town-level protection for the Finger Lakes Trail protection—currently there is no official protection for much of the FLT.
- Do the South Hill Trail extension (it is consistent with many Comprehensive Plan goals)
- Agricultural Land
 - Encourage Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs)
 - Create a registry of empty land suitable for agriculture
 - Town can encourage “multi-use farming”—different farming enterprises on the same land.
 - Town should encourage infrastructure that supports farmers, e.g. creation of a slaughterhouse in the area.

Water

- Consider the role of City of Ithaca in watershed protection (lands draining to the creek)
 - What are they up to, what could be funded through partnership
 - City has vested interest in partnering with Caroline for watershed protection
- Research how well-protected streambelts are under current DEC law—is local action needed?
 - E.g. what are required setbacks by developers from watercourses; do those seem adequate?
- Create and protect public access to waterways for fishing and swimming
 - Evaluate protections that are in place and clarify access for fishing, recreation, etc.
 - Town should enable more public access
 - Get DEC representative here to clarify
- Continue vigilance to ensure that development does not impact water quality (through town’s existing review process). Make sure includes robust analysis of water quality
- Evaluate environmental impacts of current sanding, salting and deicing of roads policies
 - Conduct stream monitoring for salt
- Identify good locations for Fire Department access to streams and good locations for installing dry hydrants
- Educate and inspire public to value the Caroline environment
 - Hold nature walks (fosters community building); draw on local expertise of plant enthusiasts, bird watchers, etc.
 - Create a website of photos and other media showing off Caroline’s natural environment
 - Maybe a Cornell Class project or a paid student internship?

- Needs a coordinator

Sustainability

- Create a Green Infrastructure Plan—a holistic plan for the town
 - Mapping: visualization of all the important land elements, drawing on GIS maps from the county, Finger Lakes Land Trust protected properties and FLLT’s “emerald necklace” vision.
 - Publicize map to public and invite community to add to it
 - Create a list/overview of where it might make sense for various things (solar, agriculture, water sources). Could help with grants/funding/investors.
- Winning hearts and minds
 - Combat NIMBYism
 - “Do it for your kids!” (or grandchildren....)
 - Publicize economic benefits of green planning
 - Good jobs
 - Particularly if have cooperative/local ownership
 - Recreational benefits—hunting, fishing, swimming holes
 - Tourism (vineyards, B&B’s, “farm stays”—fresh air and water)
- Capitalize on Synergy—town could help promote
 - Farmers/ag experts/gardners
 - Green energy investors/researchers, recycling
 - Carbon farming
 - Hemp
 - Willow
 - Mushrooms
 - Green building supplies