

The Legislature of Rockland County



HARRIET D. CORNELL

Legislator – District 10

Chair – Environmental Committee
Chair – Special Committee on Transit
Vice Chair -Economic Development Committee

Budget & Finance Committee
Government Operations

For Immediate Release

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Task Force On Water Resources Management Reviews Drought & Flood Information

Update On Draft Conservation Plan

Public Meeting Set For Monday, Nov. 23

New City, NY (Nov. 20, 2015) - The Rockland County Task Force on Water Resources Management will meet Monday to discuss several of its efforts, including updates from the Drought & Flood Committee.

The Task Force, chaired by Rockland County Legislator Harriet D. Cornell, is developing strategies for conservation and ways to reduce demand, among other priority issues, as part of an overall effort to include residents in decisions about Rockland’s water supply. Water demand has decreased in recent years as a result of updated plumbing fixtures and increased interest by residents and businesses in using less water.

The Drought & Flood Committee will offer a summary of the new “drought model” created to show what might happen if Rockland were hit by the equivalent of the 1966 drought, the worst ever to hit the county. The model considers simulated rain and water withdrawal scenarios and is meant to assist future drought management strategies.

Also on the agenda are updates on a green infrastructure feasibility study on groundwater recharge and surface water storage being conducted for the Task Force by engineering students from the Stevens Institute of Technology.

Additionally, there will be updates on meetings and collaboration efforts with Suez Water, formerly called United Water, and the New York State Public Service Commission.

The Task Force was created in June 2014 and is comprised of 19 members representing the County Executive, County Legislature, and local governments, academia, business and advocates.

The Task Force resulted after United Water's effort to build a costly Hudson River desalination plant galvanized residents into opposing the facility in favor of further studies of the existing supply and demand, and deeper exploration of alternatives.

In November 2014, the Public Service Commission determined that while Rockland may one day need more water, it doesn't need it until at least 2020. In the same decision, the PSC said opponents of the plant would now have the time they needed to implement conservation measures designed to possibly delay or prevent the project.

In July, United Water withdrew from active participation in the Task Force following an independent report that was critical of some of the company's operations. Key findings on the status of the local water supply determined that repairing a leaky system and boosting customer conservation could add millions of gallons to the inventory.

Last month, the PSC asked United Water to work with the Task Force to develop a draft conservation plan that the company will submit as part of its upcoming rate case.

The Task Force will meet from 5:30 p.m. to 7:20 p.m. Monday, Nov. 23 in Room 301 at Clarkstown Town Hall, 10 Maple Ave. in New City. Visit the Task Force's website at <http://rocklandgov.com/departments/planning/task-force-on-water-resources-management/> for more information.

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