

Land Conservation Acreage Milestones

Acreage goals set a milestone to achieve and a sense of accomplishment when they are reached. Ultimately, they are used as a measure of program success. Below are some land conservation acreage goals, including specific milestones for the resource character areas discussed in Section II of this report.

- Aim to protect an additional 3,000 acres of Town and Village lands in the long-term. This amount would more than double the existing 2,800 acres (12% of total Town and Village land area, 22,848 acres) protected to-date and would protect approximately 25% of the total Town and Village land area.
- Aim to protect a balanced mix of acreage and resources in each of the open space vision character areas. Acreage milestones for each character area are as follows:

Shawangunk Ridge: 500 acres

Butterville-Canaan Foothills: 500 acres

Wallkill Flats and River Corridor: 500 acres

North Woods and Eastern Wetlands: 500 acres

Orchards, Farms and Ridge-Views: 1,000 acres

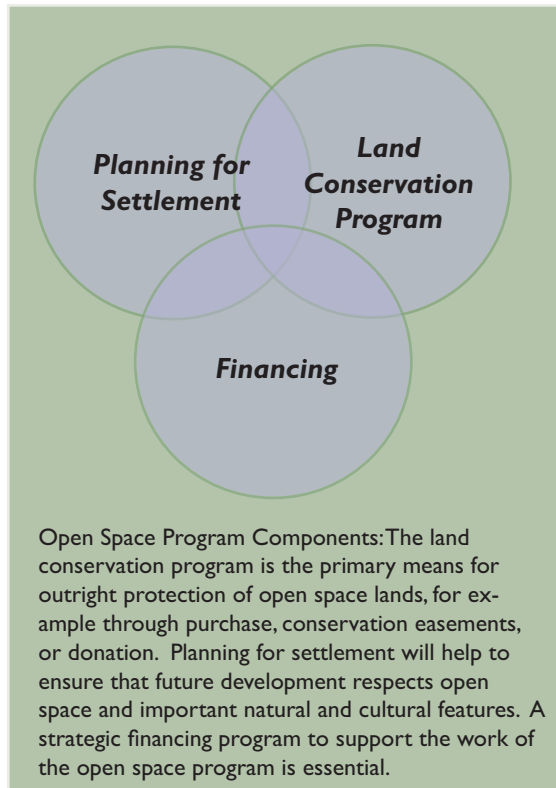
Three Components of the New Paltz Open Space Program

Fulfilling the open space vision of the New Paltz community will require a substantial investment of financial resources as well as a dedicated investment in planning for the future. The land conservation program helps to directly preserve open space through purchase, donation, conservation easement, etc. However, preserving priority parcels alone will not deliver the ambitious open space vision of the community. Open space must also be preserved by creating smarter development that preserves natural resources and open space (planning for

settlement or development-side planning). In a parallel process to the land conservation program, development-side tools to protect open space (e.g., changes to local laws and design guidelines) should be implemented.

Implementing both the land conservation program and the development-side planning requires an appropriate funding program. Thus, when planning a comprehensive open space protection program in New Paltz, three important and intersecting components should be considered concurrently: the land conservation program, financing the open space program, and planning for future settlement. It is also important that continuous administration, coordination, education and outreach be woven into each of these components.

The following sections will include a more detailed discussion of the needs and goals of each of the three open space program components, as well as long and short-term recommendations.





The scenic Butterville-Canaan Road follows the edge of the ridge through rolling hills and a rural setting.

Introduction

This section of the plan sets the stage for implementation by outlining conservation milestones and providing recommendations for achieving the milestones. **This plan recommends setting a milestone of 3,000 acres of additional open space** (or 25% of the Town and Village land area) with a balanced mixture of lands in all of the Town and Village character areas. Recommendations for achieving this goal, through both land conservation and planning for settlement that respects the natural, agricultural and scenic qualities of New Paltz, are provided.

General Conservation Goals

Conservation goals help to ensure that the intent of the program is carried out and provide guidance in making decisions. Below are some general goals to consider in advancing the open space plan.

- Protect significant lands for each type of resource or character area identified in the vision: Shawangunk Ridge, Butterville-Canaan Foothills, Wallkill Flats and River Corridor, North Woods and Eastern Wetlands, Orchards, Farms and Ridge-views, Heart of New Paltz, and Scenic Cultural Landscapes.
- Create connections, trails and greenway linkages on a Town-wide basis as part of the conservation process. Providing public access to conservation lands (as appropriate) helps the community connect to the land and raises support and awareness for future conservation efforts.
- Conserve working landscapes where landowners are stewards of the landscape.
- Create a balanced geographical distribution of resource protection by conserving lands across the Town, and especially east of the Wallkill River, where a very limited acreage of land is currently protected.
- Focus primary efforts on protecting priority parcels, as identified through a detailed ranking process.
- Balance public investments in open space and resource conservation with the community's tax base and fiscal capacity; and in proportion with the community's other important investment needs.
- Facilitate intermunicipal and regional conservation initiatives for mutual community benefit.

Table 1: Open Space Milestones and Implementation Summary for Character Areas in New Paltz

Character Area*	Major Conservation Value	Major Resource(s) for Protection	Existing Total Land (acres)	Existing Protected Land (acres)	Land Conservation Milestone (acres)	Future Protected Land (acres)	Major Tool(s) For Protection	Major Recommended Project(s)
Shawangunk Mountains	Wildlife corridor, biodiversity, scenic views	Forestland, ridges	3,100	1,800	500	2,300	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fee simple purchase and donation• Conservation easements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support and partner with land trusts and conservation organizations. This can be done through dedicated staff time, or the provision of seed funding or matching funds.
Butterville-Canaan Foothills	Habitat buffer, scenic views	Foothills, wetland patches, stream corridors, agricultural and open lands	3,600	400	500	900	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conservation development• Conservation easements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a greenbelt system along the streams and open lands in the area.• Develop a bike tour and map for the area’s scenic roads.• Revise zoning and subdivision regulations to provide a process for conservation development.
Wallkill Flats & River Corridor	Greenway and wildlife corridor, water quality, agricultural productivity	River corridor, river wetlands, floodplain forest, agricultural lands	2,200	100	500	600	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulatory protection (FEMA and floodplain protection)• Conservation easements• Park and trail development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support /develop matching seed funding for local and regional land trusts for a proposed PDR of farmlands along the Wallkill River (farms below Huguenot Street).• Conduct a specific Wallkill River water trail planning process along the Wallkill River and tributaries.• Explore conservation opportunities in the oxbow and forest floodplains and adjacent tributaries, and connect to the “north woods.”
North Woods & Eastern Wetlands	Wildlife habitat, water quality	Wetland patches, woodland patches	2,900	200	500	700	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulatory protection (wetlands)• Conservation development• Conservation easements and fee simple purchase and donation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conserve the Swartekill wetlands and buffer major stream corridors.• Enhance development setbacks.• Acquire key parcels for access and protection.
Orchards, Farms and Ridge Views	Agricultural productivity; scenic/rural character	Active farmlands and open lands	2,300	200	1,000	1,200	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conservation easements or PDR• Conservation development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program to protect productive agricultural lands and safeguard scenic views.
Heart of New Paltz	Community connections to open space	Parks, trails and greenway connections	1,100	100 6.5 miles (rail trail)	Establish in trail plan	Establish in trail plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trail and parkland construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create a joint Town and Village trails master plan.• Develop and implement the internal conservation concepts within the Mill Brook Preserve.• Develop the concept for a greenway park and trail along Mill Brook towards the Wallkill River area and other off-site trail links.
Scenic and Historic Landscapes	Historic and scenic quality; rural character; community appreciation and awareness	Scenic viewsheds, scenic roads, historic hamlets, historic buildings, homes, and landscapes	Unknown	Unknown	Protected through above acreage	Protected through above acreage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scenic/historic easements• Inclusion of scenic/historic features in all conservation projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance historic resource inventory by conserving identified resources.• Develop design guidelines for scenic areas.
Town and Village Overall	Balanced diversity of above	Balanced diversity of above	22,848	2,800 (12%)	3,000	5,700 (25%)		See Recommendations Section

**Note: Some character areas have overlapping resources and a portion of the New Paltz land area does not fit into any of the character areas. Thus, the character area acreages do not add up to the total town acreage. All numbers are rounded to the nearest 100.*

The Land Conservation Program

The primary goal of the land conservation program is to protect the Town's priority open space lands through land purchase, conservation easement and other innovative mechanisms. The community open space vision and concepts presented in Section II of this report were used to develop resource criteria for rating and prioritizing parcels for inclusion in an open space conservation program. The resource criteria are provided in Appendix B, and include both pragmatic categories such as the potential for project success as well as community values developed in the visioning process and resource-based character-area goals.

Once the parcels are rated, priority parcels can then be acquired through the land conservation program. However, before land transactions and acquisition begins, it is important that a dedicated funding source for the program is established. This plan recommends that a municipal bond be established to help fund the program. Advance education and outreach to the community on the goals of the conservation program will help to garner support for the program and bond. There are, however, many other potential opportunities and tools for protecting priority open space lands through the land conservation program, many of which are highlighted in the following recommendations.

Land Conservation Program Recommendations:

IMMEDIATE (Present to 2 years):

- Identify/appoint a temporary representative(s) to oversee the below recommendations of the open space planning process.
- Conduct third-party parcel rating (by a consultant or other neutral entity who is not directly associated with New Paltz) using the

resource criteria and parcel rating system in Appendix B and develop a priority parcel list.

- Explore a range of conservation easement options and programs including permanent and term easements as one open space conservation tool.
- Provide technical assistance for landowners in the form of grant writing, legal advice, etc. to remove potential barriers to program participation.
- Conduct ongoing outreach and education on the land conservation program and its benefits to the community.
- Conduct ongoing landowner outreach to gauge interest and participation in the land conservation program.
- Develop educational materials to provide to realtors, the development community, and landowners on the open space plan, conservation easements, and other conservation options for landowners.

SHORT-TERM (3-5 years):

- Hire a Town planner or seek a long-term consultant relationship to provide consistent oversight of open space implementation and to serve as a direct contact for landowners. See page 53, Land Planning Services, for more details on the types of services that this person could provide to the Town's landowners.
- Create and maintain a database of agricultural land supply in the community to serve as a clearinghouse/point source on available agricultural land supply, land use and protection status in New Paltz. This database would help direct farmers to potential parties with interest in renting or leasing lands, as well as other business development and growth sharing opportunities. It would provide information to long-time existing farmers, as well as new,

start-up farms and community supported agriculture. Agricultural education and outreach materials should be created along with this database.

- Conduct a cooperative planning workshop (or set of workshops) with agricultural landowners to identify potential zoning and other barriers to successful farming and revise zoning and other local laws as appropriate to ensure that farmers can continue to keep their lands open.
- Create a master plan for trails and greenways in the Town (keeping regional connections in mind). Coordinate with other existing Town, Village, and regional bicycle, pedestrian and trails committees and with other relevant work, such as the Shawangunk Mountains Scenic Byway plan, the recommendations of the ongoing Town and Village Department of Transportation study, and the trail work of the Southern Ulster Alliance. Ensure that all new development (and conservation plans where appropriate) includes trail access as indicated within the trail plan.
- Support the efforts of local land trusts by matching funds for projects that help to pro-

tect priority open space parcels or otherwise achieve the open space vision.

- When completed, review the biological research of the Metropolitan Conservation Alliance and incorporate its recommendations into this planning process and/or the parcel rating criteria. Similarly, review the research currently being conducted on historic landscapes and incorporate its findings. Continue to revise this plan as more regional open space/ conservation and agricultural planning and research becomes available.

Financing Open Space Protection

Obtaining the necessary level of funding for the open space program requires an extensive fundraising and financing program. To achieve the level of protection desired by the community, it is recommended that the Town develop a municipal bond, tailored to meet the community's fiscal capacity. However, this should not be considered the sole source of funding but rather as one of many potential opportunities. There are numerous opportunities to leverage local investment with local, federal and state grant programs and other funding sources.



An agricultural database will help to track active and potential farmland.

To achieve success at financing the program, it is important to conduct continuous community and landowner outreach. Ensure that the community is aware of the goals and intentions of the program, how their potential contributions will be spent and how the projects will benefit the community as a whole. It is also important that landowners understand how much the program will cost them and what they will receive for differing funding levels. This level of outreach will help to raise the level of awareness for open space investment.

Financing/Fundraising Recommendations:

IMMEDIATE (Present to 2 years):

- Continue to set annual budget allocations for “green infrastructure” including capital and program delivery costs. As mentioned earlier, engage a consultant or staff services to deliver the community’s open space program.
 - Conduct a cost of community services study to compare the costs of bonding for open
- space conservation to the costs of population growth without conservation.
 - Seek county, state and federal grants to match/ implement land conservation and trail projects.
 - Prepare a bonding package and conduct municipal bonding that is appropriate for the community’s fiscal capacity. Bonding involves several important steps, including: identifying the purpose of funding, amount of funding requested, terms of bonding, and developing the bond ballot language. See the below text box on weighing strategies for developing a bond package.
 - Review and consider adoption of a local law (upon pending enabling law passage by the State of New York) to impose an up to 2% real estate transfer tax to increase the dedicated funding available for preservation of open space resources.

Strategies for Open Space Bonding

Bond Amount Proposal

Some communities have successfully pursued voter approval or permissive referendum of a designated amount of funding authorization. Funding expended under this authorization must meet its purposes, but the work remains to identify the specific projects and to bring projects to closure. The advantage of this approach is that the community has a commitment of funding to work on real estate transactions for conservation. However, the specific projects are not necessarily identified upfront. This approach also postpones the costs of preparing the projects. The Town of Red Hook, in Dutchess County, NY followed this approach, obtained successful voter authorization and is proceeding with closing on projects that permanently conserve key farms in the community.

Project-Driven Bond Proposal

Some communities choose to identify specific projects first, and propose a body of projects for authorization. The benefit of this approach is that the Town board and voters know exactly what projects are proposed for funding. This approach requires up-front costs to identify and refine the proposed projects ahead of an authorization. The Town of Pittsford and its Greenprint for the Future program and the Town of Webster, both in Monroe County, NY identified specific parcels for investment through this process.

Major Open Space Program Financing Options

Local Appropriations

Local government can appropriate funds (through local budget authority) collected through property taxes to purchase lands, development rights, etc. This type of budget allocation can be a one-time annual appropriation or a multi-year appropriation. Local appropriations are limited to available funds and are weighed against other public costs, often producing limited results for open space conservation.

Municipal Bonds

A local government can issue a bond to finance special projects, such as open space preservation. A municipal bond allows for a municipality to raise capital applicable for investment in capital projects (not operating costs) and repay the debt (bond principal and interest) over time. Bonds can be retired in 20 years or 30 years, for example. A municipal bond can be placed on a ballot during a local election for voter approval, or it can be subject to permissive referendum. Under permissive referendum, the municipal board may take an action without a vote, however, voters have an opportunity to petition the decision and require a ballot measure. Successful municipal bonding requires extensive public outreach and education, but provides the opportunity to obtain necessary dedicated open space conservation funds for the open space program.

Real Estate Transfer Tax

An emerging and very promising opportunity for local open space financing is currently being considered by the New York State legislature called the “Community Preservation Act.” This legislation would allow local governments (upon voter approval) to impose up to a 2% tax on real estate transactions to fund agricultural and open space conservation, recreational opportunities, and other important environmental benefits. This option is interesting to local governments because it is a way to generate open space funds without charging the taxpayer. First-time homebuyers and purchases below the median home value in the County would be exempt from the tax.

- Conduct local fund-raising efforts within the community to supplement program funds and more importantly help to raise awareness and interest in the land conservation program. Collaborate with the Wallkill Valley Land Trust on this initiative.

SHORT-TERM (2-5 years):

- Consider an annual property tax levy to create a dedicated open space capital reserve fund. This would provide consistent funding for the land conservation program.

- Explore increasing the recreation fee for new development in the Town and Village to help fund open space/trail development and maintenance.
- If the community decides to pursue an updated comprehensive plan, and/or a generic environmental impact statement (GEIS) to evaluate build-out and future land-use alternatives, the community may be in a position to develop additional laws that could serve to protect open space. As an example, over the span of about four years, the Town of Clifton Park, in Saratoga County, NY created

General Obligation Bonding for New Paltz: Community Willingness to Pay

In June 2005, Behan Planning Associates talked with the Town's assessor for a brief, up-to-date look at what the preliminary, potential costs would be for the Town of New Paltz based on 2005 data. Below is a breakdown of bond costs for \$1 million, \$2 million and \$5 million for a Town conservation program, based on Town of New Paltz information.*

Municipal Bond Principal	Average Town Payment at 5%, 30-year term	Tax Rate/ \$1,000 AV	Annual Cost to Household Assessed Value of \$175,000	Annual Cost to Household Assessed Value \$275,000
\$1 Million	\$64,419/year	0.0873	\$15	\$24
\$2 Million	\$128,838/year	0.1746	\$31	\$48
\$5 Million	\$322,095/year	0.4364	\$76	\$120

A national land conservation organization that has worked extensively throughout New York State, the Trust for Public Land (TPL) has identified that for communities in New York, there has been clear voter support for community open space bond votes that are \$50 or less of annual cost per average household.

Based on the findings of the community survey conducted by the New Paltz Open Space Committee in 2003, the community indicated a general willingness to pay for open space protection. The survey mailed to 1,600 sample households of property owners and renters had a response rate of about 35%. About 77% of the survey respondents said the town and village should actively pursue protecting open space as a strategy to keep New Paltz fiscally healthy and affordable. Over 67% of the respondents favored some level of a tax increase to support open space protection. Of those 67% that would support some level of a tax increase: about 2/3 supported a range of \$10 to \$100 per year per average household; and the other 1/3 supported a range of \$100 to \$300 per year per average household. (See Appendix C for details about the survey results.)

In summary, the potential costs of investing \$1 million to \$2 million in green infrastructure may be a viable option for the community. It is recommended that New Paltz present detailed program information to the community as part of any bond proposal. Identifying specific projects, costs and benefits will also be important.

** NOTE: Town's total taxable assessed value is \$738 million for all properties. Average home value (assessed value) is about \$275,000 according to Michael Dunham, Town assessor on June 3, 2005.*

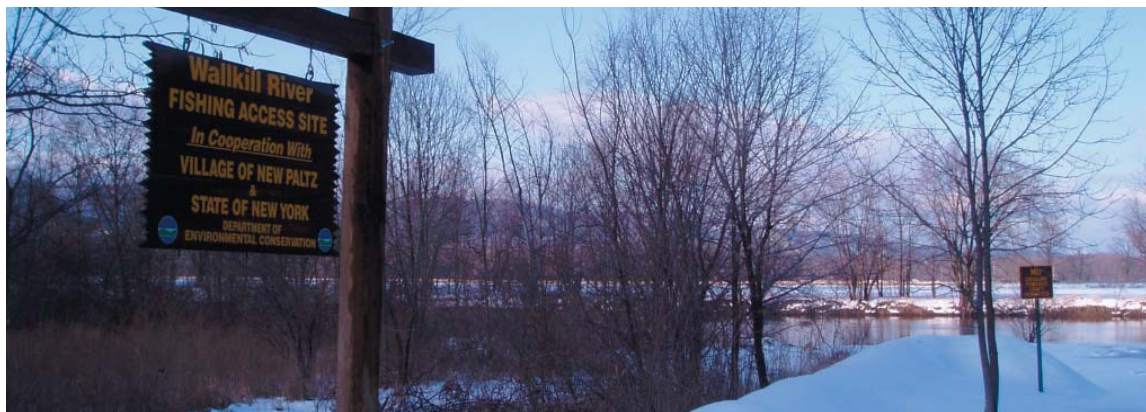
Cost of Community Services

A summary of 58 “costs of community services” (COCS) studies by the American Farmland Trust calculated the median cost per dollar of revenue raised to provide public services (such as police and fire protection, water and sewer services, roads and schools) to each of the three different land uses. These studies have been conducted around the United States, and primarily have been conducted on communities of less than 25,000 residents. The studies have shown that for every dollar these communities received from residential uses, the median amount the communities had to expend to service them was \$1.16. In contrast, for every dollar received from commercial/industrial uses and from farm/forest/open space uses, the median amount they had to expend was \$0.27 and \$0.36 respectively. For every dollar in tax revenues received from the residential sector in Beekman, NY, for example, \$1.12 was spent on public services. In contrast, every dollar of revenue accruing from farm/forest/open space uses in Beekman required only \$0.48 in public service costs.

The main conclusion of the COCS study findings is that, as a rule, typical residential development does not pay for itself: it costs local governments more to provide services to homeowners than residential property owners pay in property taxes. Likewise, the findings of COCS studies have been remarkably consistent in confirming the same overall pattern: that farm, forest and open land generate a surplus of revenues for local budgets, while residential development creates a net loss due to its high service demands. Although farm and open lands generate less revenue overall than residential, commercial or industrial properties, they have modest requirements for public services, and thus typically provide a fiscal surplus to offset the shortfall in revenues for residential services.

Sources:

- American Farmland Trust (2000). Cost of Community Services Studies Fact Sheet. http://www.farmlandinfo.org/documents/27757/FS_COCS_11-02.pdf
- Crompton, John L. (2000). The Impact of Parks and Open Space on Property Values and the Property Tax Base. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association.
- American Farmland Trust and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Dutchess County (1989). Cost of Community Services Study: Towns of Beekman and Northeast, Dutchess County, New York. Milbrook, NY: American Farmland Trust and Cornell Cooperative Extension.



Fishing access in the Village of New Paltz along the Wallkill River.

an Open Space Plan, followed up with an updated Comprehensive Plan, and conducted additional focused land-use planning and build-out analysis for the western, rural half of town through the context of a Western Clifton Park Generic Environmental Impact Statement. The GEIS process helped the town develop open space incentive zoning (also known as amenity zoning) for which in exchange for allowing some increased density up to a cap, developers would buy development rights for parcels within identified priority areas of town, or alternatively pay a mitigation fee. This tool was adopted and enacted in 2005.

Planning for Settlement

It is not realistic to think that every landowner will be willing to permanently protect his or her “priority parcel.” And, even if this was the case, without appropriate land-use planning for the remaining town and village lands, these parcels may become “islands of green” in a surrounding matrix of development. Ideally, future development in the town and village will complement and support the goals of the open space plan, for example by protecting the function of habitat corridors (i.e., large unfragmented patches of lands, stream and river corridors).

Furthermore, a full build-out of the town and village under current zoning and development controls is not likely to support the community’s open space vision. Working creatively with landowners and developers to create solutions to zoning and other land use planning tools can help to ensure that open space goals are met through the development process.

This open space plan is not a substitute for a solid comprehensive plan that effectively addresses housing, services, transportation, health and welfare, and environmental well-being.

This plan has identified conceptual conservation areas. One of the major recommendations of the land conservation program is to refine these areas using a rating system to identify specific parcels desired for conservation. This process should be simultaneously complemented with a similar process to identify desired areas for development, with extensive community input through planning charrettes and workshops. This process is an important implementation item of the open space plan, and can be conducted jointly with a comprehensive plan update.

Alternatives for development and conservation should be fully explored through cost of community services (COCS) studies, fiscal impact analysis, and/or cost-benefits studies to ensure that they are fiscally sound and meet the community’s goals, including the need to maintain workforce and housing affordability in an expanding regional housing market. Ulster County’s *Priority Strategies to Support Housing Development* identifies housing targets, and can serve as a guide for this work.

Planning for settlement includes conducting planning processes to identify conservation and development areas and examining their fiscal impacts; it includes creating or updating planning documents (such as the comprehensive plan); it includes making revisions to zoning code and other land use controls. It also includes a suite of innovative and creative ways that landowners and the community can partner to create development that respects and enhances the open space vision. Many of these creative tools have been discussed throughout this report, including the ideas of area master planning (page 38) and conservation analysis (pages 16-17). These planning for settlement processes and tools should be developed together in a comprehensive manner with the open space conservation program.

Model Communities With Voter-Approved Public Investments in Conservation

In the Hudson Valley Region:

In November 2005, voters in the Town of Beekman, Dutchess County, NY supported a \$3 million open space bond by a 2.5 to 1 margin. The Town Board had adopted a town open space plan in Spring 2005.

In 2003, voters in the Town of Red Hook, Dutchess County, NY approved a \$3.5 million open space bond by an approximately 80 percent margin to purchase the development rights from interested farmers. The Town's investment is being leveraged with dollars from a Dutchess County matching grant program, technical assistance from Dutchess Land Conservancy, a land trust, and follows significant investment by Scenic Hudson, a regional conservation organization. The Town adopted an open space plan in 2000.

In 2000, voters in the Town of Warwick, Orange County, NY approved a \$9 million bond for open space and farmland protection. The local goal is to protect approximately 3,000 acres of the Town's farmland and open space. A study for the Town of Warwick estimated that the continued development otherwise would cost taxpayers an estimated \$4 to \$5 million per year in additional school taxes.

In New York State:

In 2004, voters in the Town of Webster, Monroe County, NY approved a \$5.9 million bond program, and subsequently have secured matching grants from federal, New York State, and Monroe County to leverage their local dollars to meet their program budget of close to \$7.9 million. The 2002 fiscal model prepared for the Town and school district showed that for every dollar invested in open space conservation, town residents would save an equal dollar in avoided costs associated with growth. Hence, in that community, there was no net cost of investing in open space land acquisitions.

In 1998, the Town of Pittsford, Monroe County, NY approved a \$9.9 million bond for open space and farmland protection. When the Town reviewed the fiscal impact of the \$9.9 million dollar open space bond, it was determined that the approximate \$64 per year cost to the average household to pay for the bond would be far less than doing nothing about open space bonding, as the cost of community services to serve that additional development would impact the average householder about \$250 per year in new taxes for schools, road maintenance, and other community services.



The O'Connor farm in the Town of Beekman is important to the community both as an active farm and for its natural and scenic values.

Planning for Settlement Recommendations:

IMMEDIATE:

- Conduct a community-wide build-out analysis to assess the potential contributions and impacts of development in the landscape, and the community capacity to absorb additional development as feasible under exist-

ing zoning and land use controls. The fiscal costs and benefits of these conservation and development alternatives should be evaluated through this process, which can help to inform the comprehensive plan update.

- Build the community's fiscal resources and capacity through "development side" planning and zoning review. If the community is

Land Planning Services

As a key component of the land conservation process, it is recommended that a planning and design professional(s) is hired to serve as a specific point person for the community to provide ongoing, consistent consultation services on the community's comprehensive plan, open space plan, trails plan, etc. This person can also offer consistent guidance on future planning endeavors in the Town and Village to ensure that they are consistent with the goals of the open space plan.

Land planning services can help to provide landowners with guidance on the community planning concepts for conservation and development. Land planning services can also help landowners interpret the community's broader planning concepts in relation to the site specific parcels and areas and help to identify opportunities for trail connections, resource greenbelt corridors, and much more.



A winter image of the Swartekill wetlands in the eastern part of Town.

Land Planning Recommendations:

- Provide early consultation with landowners on preliminary concepts for conservation and development.
- Provide education and guidance on available tools, handbooks and guidelines, zoning, planning, design guidelines, conservation options, etc. that offer alternative design concepts and other options.
- Specific site planning design and layout for conservation and development should be conducted by the landowner using their own private consultant following initial consultation with the town's planning representative. The Town's planning representative could remain involved for ongoing consultation, but would not be responsible for delivering the project designs.

interested in reducing its out of pocket costs for increasing investments in open space, one way to address the fiscal capacity is to increase the net revenue generating land uses (tax base), such as commercial land uses – in balance with the community’s desired overall land use vision and other impacts of increased types of commercial development.

- Continue to partner with landowners where development is the option – to create open space conservation developments (use the Mill Brook Preserve as a model for this type of partnership).
- Provide support for landowners (e.g., by providing staff assistance) to conduct detailed land planning to prepare for conservation and development.

SHORT-TERM:

- Conduct a comprehensive plan update with broad community and landowner involvement program. Update the land use plan and implement zoning and other tools to achieve the desired growth patterns. Use a character-area level analysis during this process to ensure that the land-use vision and tools represent the unique resources and characters of the town. Assess natural limitations (such as floodplains, topography, wildlife habitat, etc.) of specific character areas in amending the town and village zoning to conform to the updated land use vision.
- Develop conservation design standards and design guidelines on a character-area level to help protect and build on the unique features within each character area.

Summary

New Paltz should continue to invest in servicing the needs and demand for conservation in balance with local fiscal capacity. Continued conservation and development-side planning will require investment in staffing as well as financial commitments. Guiding future growth and development is critical to maintaining sound fiscal health as well as for conserving resources in a comprehensive manner at the site level.

New Paltz has many potential partners that can provide assistance in achieving its conservation goals: landowners, not-for-profits, regional entities, conservation organizations, farmland organizations, and outside governmental sources, to name a few. Partners can help leverage local investment and ultimately lead to the goal of this plan: achieving the community’s open space vision.



New Paltz’s Open Spaces are an important investment for current and future generations.