

Town of New Paltz
1 Veterans Drive, New Paltz, NY 12561



Clean Water & Open Space Preservation Commission

Minutes of the November 14, 2007 meeting.

Present: Brad Barclay, Joan Barker, Lynn Bowdery, Jim DeLaune, Marion Dubois, Bob Gabrielli, Jim Hyland, David Jones, Cara Lee, Seth McKee, Dennis Moore

Also present: Kathleen Healey, Sue Stegen, Ellen M. Sticker (Sect.), Fawn Tantillo

This meeting was held at Town Hall and began at 7:35PM.

1 **Welcome – Kathleen Healey:** Kathleen welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the Clean Water and Open Space Preservation Commission. Kathleen noted that she, along with Seth, Cara and Marion had served on the Open Space Committee (OSC) and that the OSC began in 1999 with a mission of developing a plan for preserving open space in New Paltz including viewsheds, farmland, wildlife corridors and open space in general. The OSC produced an Open Space Plan and the public supported a bond for 2 million dollars. The Town Board was required to set up a Commission to implement the Open Space Plan and utilize the bond for preservation of open space for the benefit of the landowners and the community as a whole. Seth thanked the Town Board for their leadership and commitment.

2. **Introductions of Commission Members:** Seth noted that there were several people present that aren't formally part of the Commission right now, but that it will be helpful to have many people included in the conversation in the event of turnover of members. Fawn Tantillo and Sue Stegen were asked to participate fully although they are not voting members.

Seth has been Co-chair on the OSC and Cara noted that Seth does not want to continue to chair the Commission. Cara & Seth will provide leadership for the first couple of weeks of this new Commission until everyone is familiar with each other, the Law, and the Open Space Plan and then the new leadership for the Commission can be determined. Members were asked to give a little information about themselves:

Seth McKee has been in New Paltz since 1995 and has been working on the OSC since 2000. He is the Land Conservation Director at Scenic Hudson. He feels we have a very special community with incredible views, working farms, wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. He would like to see all of this remain as it is a big part of what makes the community special.

Bob Gabrielli grew up in New Paltz, went to St. Joseph's School and SUNY New Paltz. He loves the woods, works for NYS, owns a Real Estate agency, and was on the Town Board. He is excited about this Commission because he feels open space should be preserved, but feels if we are to attain a public good it should be a public project that all can share in. Bob has friends that are farmers and landowners and notes that they are all behind this project.

Cara Lee has lived in New Paltz for 15 years. She was Chair of the EnCC, and was on the OSC. She works for The Nature Conservancy developing strategies for protection of the ridge. She worked on the bond and is excited to continue with the process. She notes that the New Paltz Open Space Plan is a great plan based on others she's seen.

Fawn Tantillo has been attached to this community for a generation. She spent summers here and attended SUNY New Paltz. She has served on the Ulster County Legislature for 10 years, during which she was on the Environmental & Consumer Affairs Committee and the Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board and was involved in hearings on Farmland Protection. She believes there is more than one way to protect open space; protection is more than buying conservation rights. Also, the public has to be invested in it and it is important to maintain the public trust. Fawn applauds the Town Board and Open Space Committee for their hard work.

Dennis Moore moved here in 1973 and is married to Joan Barker. He fell in love with the area's geography, topography, and people. Has been giving back to the community in whatever ways he can. He has worked with United Way, New Paltz College Foundation, New Paltz Community Foundation, and New Paltz Rod & Gun Club. Dennis owns a consulting firm specializing in website development & design and has a background in advertising, marketing & public relations. He really feels this project is something he can believe in and felt he would like to get involved.

Joan Barker moved to New Paltz in 1990. She teaches photography at SUNY New Paltz. She loves the area, the peace, the people; the community is balanced. There has to be sensitivity to the life besides human life; we need balance. Joan has not been on a committee such as this but her heart is in it.

Jim DeLaune has lived on Plutarch Road since 1987. He is the Director of the Orange County Land Trust and was the former Director of the City of Newburgh Economic & Community Development Program. He has worked in Orange County and has decided to do something closer to where he lives so he wanted to join this commission.

Marion DuBois moved to New Paltz in 1978. She was on the New Paltz Town Planning Board, and was on the Town Board for 9 years. She is on the Village Planning Board, is an avid environmentalist and wants to have a good place for her grandchildren. Also, Marion wants to make sure that other critters besides us have a place to live.

Lynn Bowdery has been here for 21 years. She has volunteered for the Mohonk Preserve and has always loved these hills. She came to High Falls for years and had a great childhood in these woods. She has been on the New Paltz Town Planning Board for 2 ½ years and it has been an education. It is a credit to the people who own the land that they have kept open even under development pressures. She is interested in functional natural space and working farms. She has a part-time job with the Wallkill Valley Land Trust creating their baseline data and organizing monitoring.

David Jones has been here since 1996 and owns a very small farm. He came to New Paltz in the 60's and briefly attended SUNY New Paltz in the 70's. He is a classically trained jeweler and watchmaker. He grew up in the hills outside of Binghamton & hills of Pennsylvania and has seen it change dramatically there. He moved here so his children could have the childhood he had. He is frightened about what could happen here. He would love to see the community embrace the idea of how precious what we have is, and that all would preserve it because they truly believe it's important.

Jim Hyland moved here 2 years ago. They loved New Paltz at first sight. Jim has volunteered for the Bike & Pedestrian Committee and the Rail Trail Committee. He liked the idea of this Commission as it has a budget and can get things done – preserving important parcels. Jim started Winter Sun Farms which works with local farmers to do a winter share with local produce. With a cousin Jim is also working on a small subdivision in Vermont building energy efficient green homes and preserving farmland, bringing it back into production. They were able to start small and put acres back into production that the farmer wanted. Jim feels this is an important element to preserving the land when it's appropriate.

Sue Stegen is honored to be invited to sit in on this commission. Sue has been on the Beautification Committee (currently Community Improvement Team) and dearly loves New Paltz. Sue was involved in the eminent domain situation that the college did years ago and saw a beautiful part of New Paltz change dramatically. She would not like to see this type of thing happen again.

Kathleen Healey came to New Paltz in 1988. Kathleen is the managing attorney of Legal Services of the Hudson Valley for Dutchess & Ulster County. She is on the New Paltz Town Board. She is Chair of the Partners Committee in the Family Partnership Center in Poughkeepsie and is on the Board, is on the Housing Consortium in Dutchess, steering committee of the Universal Response to Domestic Violence, DSS Advisory Council and was the Town Board liaison to the New Paltz Open Space Committee. Kathy will be leaving the Town Board at the end of 2007.

Ellen Sticker has worked for Mohonk Preserve for 6 years and has been the Town of New Paltz EnCC and Open Space Committee Secretary for 3 ½ years. She will be stepping down as Secretary at the end of the year. Ellen is currently a resident of the Town of Gardiner.

Brad Barclay has been on the Wallkill Valley Land Trust for 15 years. He is a Planner for county government in Dutchess County and is the Acting Director of Parks in Dutchess County. His is a lifelong environmentalist. Through the Planning field and education Brad knows a lot about the development process and where open space plays a role in the process.

3. **“Walk-Through” of New Paltz Open Space Plan:**

All Commission members will get a copy of the Open Space Plan once copies are available.

The Open Space Committee was charged with evaluating the resources in New Paltz and developing an Open Space Plan for protection of resources. Historically/chronologically, the following steps were taken:

- An Inventory of Open Spaces was created in 2003.
- A photo shoot was organized to take specific pictures around town.
- Several public surveys were done regarding how people felt about open space; results of which were very positive toward open space protection and similar to a survey done in the 80's.
- An analysis was done on what was needed in order to pay for conservation.
- Open Space Plan was completed using Behan Planning Associates and was passed by Town Board in 2006.
- The bond was passed in 2006. (The Towns of Marbletown and Gardiner passed similar bonds as well).
- The Law creating the Commission was drafted and passed by the Town Board in August 2007.
- Interviews were held with interested candidates and the CWOSP Commission was formed.

The Plan itself is user-friendly. The Plan goal is to preserve an additional 3,000 acres in New Paltz. Currently, close to 3,000 acres are protected, most of which is acreage of Mohonk Preserve. With the additional 3,000 acre goal, 25% of New Paltz will be protected. “Protection” is defined as conserved through ownership by the Town or Village or conservation organization or by conservation easement.

The Plan contains a Vision Map for New Paltz outlining “character areas” in the community and specific acreage protection in each character area. The Plan contains a clear table of milestones which all members will need to become familiar with. The Plan also includes a complete scoring/ranking system which will allow the Commission to evaluate applications as they come in; the scoring criteria are consistent with other funding resources. All protection will depend on willing landowners and a completely transparent process.

Additional comments:

- The Plan is a starting point for the Commission.
- Behan Planning Associates created Open Space Plans for Gardiner and Marbletown as well. This will create a great deal of consistency and there will likely be opportunities for joint projects with these towns.
- The Shawangunk Mountains Regional Partnership (formerly Scenic Byway steering committee) has just signed an Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) and received grant funding from the Department of State to create a Regional Open Space Plan.
- Ulster County has just completed an Open Space Plan as well.
- There is a convergence of entities addressing regional open space protection jointly.
- Having funding at the municipality level will allow our Commission to work with the County and State to leverage other funds.
- Our Commission also has an opportunity to do public education and outreach. We need to determine an application process and establish priority criteria.

4. **Distribute Open Space Law:** All members were given a copy of the Open Space Law. With regard to drafting the Law, Cara noted that it was helpful to work with Marbletown & Gardiner so as not to create 3 different laws to achieve the same end. Therefore, New Paltz worked with Marbletown, Gardiner and the County Planning Department to draft a law. Over time it will be helpful to touch base with these towns to see how we are all progressing. The OSC also met with people from Warwick in Orange County as they are further along than anyone else in the region in terms of bonds and an open space protection program.

5. **Brainstorming on Agendas for Next Few Meetings:**

- Invite Seymour Gordon from Warwick to come & speak.
- Invite conservation organization or land trust to come in to give us a primer on conservation easements.
 - *It was asked whether Scenic Hudson or The Nature Conservancy could share preservation criteria.*
 - *On April 14 at the Hotel Thayer the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) is doing a conference and this information will be available. It was suggested that Commission members attend if possible.*
- Dutchess has had an Open Space Grant Program for a number of years. Application process is through the Planning Board. Consider looking into this program.
- Invite Ulster County to a meeting.
- Put specific work items on agendas.
- Look at other sources of funding.
- Get educated early and look at criteria.

*CARA & SETH will coordinate speakers for the next several meetings.

In a collateral discussion it was suggested that the Commission think about not only how to spend bond funds but also how to generate funds and be proactive for people to donate property for tax purposes. It was also suggested that the tax system be examined to make it affordable for people to keep undeveloped land. Although these are good ideas, members were reminded that our job is to be the Commission that shepherds and processes the bond and that we should focus on the job at hand. Over time we will develop expertise on all options for open space preservation.

6. **Schedule Meetings for 2008:**

- It was mentioned that 1 ½ hours – 2 hours should be plenty for meetings.
- Meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30PM.
- Meeting monthly in the beginning seems appropriate so that members can get educated with the Plan & Law. Can do site visits in spring.

Next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, December 12th at 7:30PM.

7. **Other Housekeeping Items:**

- If they haven't already, Commission members need to go to the Town Clerk to be sworn in for Commission membership.
- *GUY will distribute contact list to all members. *ELLEN will compare list and connect with Guy.
- If anyone knows someone who may be interested in a part-time position as CWOSP Secretary please let Seth or Cara know as Ellen will be stepping down at the end of 2007.

8. **Adjourn:** There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Sticker
EnCC & CWOSP Secretary

Town of New Paltz
1 Veterans Drive, New Paltz, NY 12561



Clean Water & Open Space Preservation Commission

Minutes of the December 12, 2007 meeting.

Present: Joan Barker, Lynn Bowdery, Marion Dubois, Bob Gabrielli, Jim Hyland, David Jones, Cara Lee, Seth McKee, Dennis Moore

Also present: Sue Stegen, Ellen M. Sticker (Sect.)

With regrets: Brad Barclay

Absent: Jim DeLaune, Fawn Tantillo

This meeting was held at Town Hall and began at 7:35PM.

1. Presentation by Town of Warwick Supervisor Michael Sweeton & Open Space and Farmland

Protection Board Chairman Seymour Gordon: For background Seth began by noting that the Town of Warwick was the leader in getting open space funding in the Hudson Valley. In 2006 New Paltz passed a bond for open space preservation.

Mike has been Supervisor in Warwick since 2002 and in 2000 Seymour headed the effort to get a funding referendum passed. In 2001 the town had a moratorium in place; therefore very little progress was made on open space preservation. The Town tried to pass an Open Space Plan which became very controversial and got tied up in re-zoning issues. In 2002 zoning passed and discussions began about how to get the PDR program off the ground. Their PDR program was patterned after the State's; the Town provides 75% of the value, asking the landowner for 25% contribution. This, coupled with resentment issues over re-zoning (2-acre zoning to 4-acre) created issues.

Comments/suggestions/recommendations from Mike & Seymour and questions during discussion included:

- To jump start the PDR program the Town Board made the commitment to provide 100% of value versus 75%.
- Town also agreed to pay for all costs except for landowner legal fees – this was helpful to get people interested to proceed.
- Seymour strongly suggested using the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). They have an office in Ulster County. This organization gives soil values on parcels. They are helpful in every way and can provide maps as well.
- In an effort to save taxpayer money it is helpful to partner with other organizations e.g. Scenic Hudson, Orange County Land Trust, Federal, State &/or County funds. This makes the bond funds go as far as it can.
- Consider a grant writer.

- Warwick has a Community Preservation Fund from real estate transfer tax (.75%) referendum. They currently have \$450,000 in the fund in the first 7 months of its existence. It hasn't diminished the real estate market in Warwick.
- Warwick encourages farmers to accept an installment note. They take 1/20th of the easement value per year; they get 5% interest twice per year – paid from the bond funds. It is permissible for the Town to issue a municipal bond – a short term bond anticipation note (BAN). All Towns should be familiar with this type of note.
- Warwick's approach in identifying parcels: they went to Town Assessor and got a list of landowners of 40 acres or more receiving agricultural assessment. They worked from this list which was over 100 landowners.
- Warwick has 7 to 10,000 acres of upland farm. They have 15 farms under easement who have sold their development rights totaling 2,300 acres. They hope to use the Community Preservation Fund for another 2,300 acres.
- Good soils are prime criteria for a farm and NYS won't look at anything with less than 50% prime soils.
- Ranking system is crucial to transparency. Must have a fool-proof system.
- Don't have locals do evaluations to determine ranking. Warwick uses farmers from outside the town to come look at applications, do site visits to farms and fill out criteria sheets. Strongly advised to do it this way. This is an evaluation to determine ranking – this is NOT appraisal. You can ask farmers from neighboring towns or Cornell Cooperative Extension has a list of farmers who do this.
- Easement value ranges from \$4,300/acre to \$11,000/acre – average is \$8000 and is based on appraisal. Farmers own the land; there is no public access to their land.
- Warwick uses Jim Waterhouse, certified NYS appraiser with First Pioneer Farm Credit, although landowners can use whomever they would like. Whomever is used the person should be familiar with farms.
- It is suggested that farmers get a preliminary appraisal which gives the owner a good idea of what they will be getting. The appraisal is certified to the landowner. The Town insists the landowner gets 2 copies so the Town can have one.
- The landowner is offered the appraised easement value. The Town (Warwick) doesn't negotiate beyond the appraised value and they have pledged they would give the owner their true value.
- It has become clear to landowners that it's easier to deal with the Town versus developers.
- Owners are reimbursed at closing for out of pocket expenses. The Warwick Open Space Board has proposed to the Town Board that they reimburse \$15,000 or 50% of expenses, whichever is less.
- Something to look into – using bond funds to pay for grant writer. Warwick found out this is legal.
- It would be valuable to have public informational meetings at this point. Could distribute applications at these meetings and follow up. Use a list of landowners from the assessor for invitations.
- Warwick has rolling applications; no deadlines
- Warwick asks for a commitment in writing. There is a simple purchase agreement that the Town attorney passes on to applicant. It states that acreage is provisional and subject to survey. There is less possibility for confusion and less waste of time with the signed agreement.
- Warwick encourages those smaller acreage landowners who are contiguous to a preserved farm to apply.
- Every farm has to have a farmstead complex (where you live & main farm structures) of 5 acres or 5%. This complex includes structures or an area must be designated for a potential farmstead if there isn't one.
- A \$5,000 stewardship fee was set up. This protects the entity outside of the landowner from potential litigation. The land trust won't accept an easement without a stewardship fee. The Town has been absorbing this fee.
- Monitoring has been done by Open Space Board volunteers and they have worked with Scenic Hudson. They are obligated to monitor once per year.
- Seymour developed “nine steps to selling your development rights” which he will get to Seth or Cara.
- Procedurally, a hearing is held to acquire development rights.

- The landowner is advised to see an attorney and accountant beforehand. Warwick has used Keith Salisbury and estate lawyer in Poughkeepsie.
- In almost every case Warwick has a funding partner.
- Lobby for Community Preservation Fund.

2. **Discussion & Questions:**

- Behan Associates could help with landowner negotiations.
- It was agreed that holding informational meetings with large landowners with PowerPoint presentation would be good. It makes the process as transparent as possible. We should be able to explain the ranking system clearly (Behan Assoc. may be able to help with this). Application should be ready to distribute at these meetings. The meetings should be held before the March farming season.
- Grant writers? – Behan Associates or Nikki Koenig of the former Shingebiss Associates. We can decide based on applications whether we apply for grants.

3. **New Paltz Open Space Plan – distribution; questions & comments:**

The screening system has already been worked out (located in Plan appendix) and the Town Board endorsed this. Points system could be tweaked.

4. **Distribution of sample project applications:**

Seth & Cara talked about looking at other applications and criteria methods. Cara had copies from other locales which were distributed. **For the next meeting members should familiarize themselves with these samples.**

5. **Agenda for January meeting:**

- Comments on sample applications & ranking systems
- Implementing ranking system & application
- John Behan presentation

***CARA will follow up with Behan to invite them to January meeting.** We would like them to focus on and give a proposal for:

- meeting with us review the ranking system and criteria.
- help us develop an application.
- facilitate the informational meeting with landowners

***CARA will call Molly Correll regarding Secretary position.** If the second Wednesday of the month doesn't work out for Molly Seth/Cara will send out an email regarding other days.

Seth will do a primer on conservation easements at a future meeting.

6. **Adjourn:** There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Sticker
EnCC & CWOSP Secretary

**Clean Water and Open Space Preservation Commission
Town of New Paltz, NY
DRAFT minutes
February 5, 2008**

Present: Brad Barclay, Joan Barker, Lynn Bowdery, Jim DeLaune, Jim Hyland, Cara Lee, Seth McKee, Dennis Moore

Absent: Marion Dubois, Bob Gabrielli, David Jones, Fawn Tantillo, Sue Stegen

Also Present: Nikki Koenig Nielson, of Arcady Solutions

The meeting was called to order at 7:10PM.

The minutes from the meeting of January 9 were too problematical to review. Cara will try to help Mollie Correll learn how to take minutes.

Since Nikki Koenig Nielson was present, she was moved forward on the agenda so she could leave earlier in the evening.

Nikki explained how the NYS Ag. & Markets Farmland Protection Implementation Grants system worked. The grants are offered once, rarely twice, a year, and can be used to pay for up to 75% for the purchase of development rights of working farmland, as well as pay for some administrative costs of the transaction. Before an application goes to the state, it must go first to the Ulster County (Agriculture Committee?) for their endorsement. The deadline to get applications to the County is May 1. Nikki explained that the grants are sought on a farm by farm basis, and it is very competitive. The most important factors include likelihood of farm survival, quality of soils, natural habitat values, and development pressure. The conservation easements can be held by a variety of agencies, depending on the individual circumstances. Nikki was involved in winning the grants recently awarded for the Domino and Arrowhead farms.

Seth McKee said that we have at least two New Paltz farmers who have expressed great interest in applying for the FPIG grants, with the Open Space Bond Fund providing the remaining money necessary to purchase their development rights. We are still in the process of developing our application forms, ranking criteria, and procedures; can we somehow meet the County deadline to apply for these grants, since they will leverage our contribution so greatly?

Nikki does not think the county needs all the state application information in order to endorse a grant application, and we can go ahead for the County endorsement while we refine the applications for the State grants.

There followed a discussion of what justification the Commission had for starting applications for FPIG grants before we are ready to solicit interested parties from the town at large. The prime reasons are the time pressure of the County deadline, the fact that the owners of the farms in question have approached members of the Committee already, the lands to be preserved are

very qualified, the leverage the State money adds is very significant, and the applications can serve as pilot projects and could show prompt results from the Commission.

In order to submit applications for FPIG grants to the County, we will need affirmation from the Town Board that they will commit the amount of Open Space Bond money needed for the match if the grants are awarded.

The cost per acre of development rights could be a factor for getting a grant. If the cost is considered too high, that decreases the likelihood of getting a grant. The cost per acre of the Domino Farm was \$7,500, and \$5,000 for Arrowhead Farms. It would be useful to know what the cost per acre of the development rights for the Two Farms Project (bought by the Wallkill Valley Land Trust and the Open Space Institute) were. Previous efforts to use the state grants to purchase development rights were foiled by the rapid rise of land prices at the time, combined with the slowness of the grant process. Jim Hyland wondered if increasing our percent of the match would make our application more attractive to the state. Nikki said it would. Jim DeLaune (?) added that we should be sure to refer any applicant to their tax accountant during negotiations because the tax advantages of a bargain sale, in which the development rights are sold for less than their true market value, can be considerable.

There followed a discussion of how to proceed.

Seth suggested starting with a quick informal appraisal of the development rights of the farms to get a ballpark idea and then talk with the land owners to see if they were willing to go forward before investing substantial money in detailed appraisals.

Jim DeLaune works with an appraiser, Greg Langer of Valuation Consultants, and he will talk to him about getting ballpark appraisals to start with.

Nikki will do the initial steps toward the County application (we can get the County application form from Dennis Doyle); it should not take her more than two hours of work to do.

Cara will email or talk to Toni to tell her what the Commission is planning to do and get her on board, since the Town Board will have to commit to the matching money for the grant.

Nikki explained her proposal to work for the Commission. She charges \$75/hr for general consulting/writing/research; \$65/hr for administrative work; can make a variety of payment arrangements for specific grant developments; and copies, postage, and travel outside of Ulster County at cost. (Proposal document attached) She said the cost for doing a grant application ranges from \$3,000 to \$4,000, and a year's grant writing could be capped at \$10,000.

Dennis Moore moved that the CWOSP recommend to the Town Board entering into a contract with Arcady Solutions to prepare grant applications for the CWOSP Commission with a maximum expenditure of \$10,000 in 2008.

Jim DeLaune seconded the motion.

All members were in favor. Motion carried.

John Behan had intended to have a draft application form and refined criteria for rating parcels for us to review at this meeting. Cara informed us that he found when he consulted his staff that there was more to do than he had anticipated, and Behan Planning Associates will be doing more work and it would take a bit longer although they will not be charging more than initially agreed to. Melissa Barry (email attached) sent a Project Evaluation and Parcel Rating Process Summary and a New Paltz GIS Data Inventory which they will do for us (attached). They will come back at the February 27 meeting with more definite proposals and a draft application form, an outline/flow chart, and review rating criteria embodying a coarse filter/fine filter approach. We would like to get any documents at least a week before the meeting so that we can study them carefully.

For the March meeting, the Commission will review the application package and other materials, and work out the logistics for the public meeting planned for April 2 at Deyo Hall. It was decided that there should be a second meeting in March, closer to the public meeting. The meetings in March will be on Wednesday the 5th, and Wednesday the 26th.

Jim DeLaune informed the Commission members about the Land Trust Alliance Northeast Conference on April 10-12 at the Hotel Thayer, West Point, NY. The educational sessions would be very useful to Commission members who aren't already familiar with the land preservation movement, and he recommended we use our budget to help with the registration costs for people who want to go. Joan Barker and Dennis Moore are interested in going.

Jim Hyland also told us about an upcoming American Farmland Trust conference that would also be very educational.

Seth will email Toni regarding use of our budget for training opportunities for our members. We would like to send 2 people to the LTA conference and 1 to the AFT conference.

There followed a brief discussion of how to publicize the public meeting. As was done for the Open Space Committee meetings, the Assessor's Office can print up labels for all properties over 20 acres, we will write a letter of invitation, and Guy Visk can handle the mailing. A press release must also be prepared for the newspapers.

Cara reported that she called Warren Weigand, the Chairman of the Gardiner Open Space Commission, and it looks like we are proceeding in parallel. Warren has emailed Cara their materials and Cara will send them on to the rest of the members.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55PM.

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Bowdery

Attachments:

6 January 2008 January 2008

Cara Lee, Interim Co-Chair
Seth McKee, Interim Co-Chair
New Paltz Open Space Commission
New Paltz Town Hall
1 Veteran's Drive
New Paltz, NY 12561

Dear Ms. Lee, Mr. McKee, and Members of the Commission:

Congratulations on beginning the next phase of the Open Space Committee's work, implementation of Open Space Preservation in our community. I have been working on open space and farmland preservation projects since 2001 throughout Ulster County and the Mid Hudson Region, with an emphasis on securing funding to leverage local and private funding.

Having worked with the Open Space Committee on other projects, and served on the Bond Campaign Committee, I look forward to implementation in New Paltz and would like to offer my consulting services. My proposal concept is to work with the Commission and identified properties proactively - in anticipation of application due dates -to develop and secure strategy and documentation about each farm. This application management process would potentially work towards prioritization and long term implementation success, while mitigating as much as possible, the inherent risks in grant applications. In sum, the goal is to maximize efficiency and limit costs.

I have recently launched my own company providing freelance writing, research and grants development, with a focus on environment/ open space, education and economic development and would like to discuss the possibility of working with the Commission to design and implement this approach.

Sincerely,

Nikki Koenig Nielson

Enc.

Fee Structure:

General consulting/ writing/ research..... \$75/ hour

Administrative work..... \$65/ hour

Grants development for identified applications..... lump sum, not to exceed, identified prior to application development, dependent on specific application needs, and amount of prerequisite work completed; range of estimates available as well

Copies, postage and travel outside Ulster County..... at cost

From: Melissa Barry [mailto:mbarry@behanplanning.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 05, 2008 1:45 PM
To: Cara Lee
Subject: Tonight's Committee Meeting - materials attached

Cara,

For tonight's committee meeting, the following documents are attached:

- List of data
- Big picture process for rating/parcel evaluation
- Map of preserved lands/deed restrictions and publicly-owned lands (can you and the committee look at this to verify if there's anything missing?)

For next meeting – Feb. 27 – we are proposing the following:

- Review a draft pre-application form
- Review outline/flowchart of the application process for applicants
- Review revised rating criteria
- Review preliminary rating/map "clusters of resources"
- Review results of parcel rating – 12-15 parcels

For the March committee meeting (is there a date set yet?):

- Review application packet for public distribution (application form, application process, FAQs, abbreviated summary of rating criteria)
- Review revised rating criteria (based on feedback from Feb. meeting)
- Discussion of draft presentation for April public meeting
- Preparation/logistics for meeting

Melissa Barry

Associate

Behan Planning Associates, LLC

New Paltz Open Space Committee

Project Evaluation and Parcel Rating Process Summary

Step 1: Resource-based analysis (refinement of existing open space plan vision) (GIS)

We will look at clusters of resources to get a better sense of how parcels fit into the larger conservation context and identify opportunities for proactive outreach.

- Farmland core areas
- Unfragmented forest areas and other core habitat areas (based on forest and habitat cover, as available)
- Parcels of contiguous ownership
- Connecting corridors
- Existing protected lands

Step 2: Preliminary parcel rating based on resources (GIS)

We will rate 12-15 parcels based on the criteria in NPOSP (criteria will be revised slightly) in order to test the criteria and make any necessary modifications. Once we are all comfortable with the results, this rating system will become the standard for all applications received through the program.

Details related to the site, such as the presence of unique geological features or historic features may need to be verified with a site visit. This qualitative information will *not* be factored into the preliminary rating but will be included in the parcel rating criteria.

Step 3: Project viability analysis (qualitative)

Projects will also be scored based on their likelihood of success, and their anticipated costs and benefits to the community. Is there a land trusts to hold the easement? Is there community support for the project? Has the landowner signed a letter of intent? Is grant funding available for the project? What are the anticipated costs to the town? This type of rating must be done at a later date when projects are before the committee. We will set up the criteria (already started in the NPOSP but need to be revised). This level of detail will require additional follow-up with the landowner and potential conservation partners and funding agencies.

Step 4: Project distribution (qualitative)

For each round of grant applications, projects may also be distributed in such a way as to ensure that there is diversity in project types (natural resource/biodiversity protection, farmland protection, scenic resources, farmland protection, etc.) and also to ensure that there is geographic diversity throughout the town. Project distribution may also be weighted depending on grant funding cycles, land trust conservation activities, and other contributing factors. We will set up project distribution criteria to ensure that these goals are met.

From Behan Planning Associates

New Paltz GIS Data Inventory:

As of February 5, 2008

Existing:

Parcels (Oct 2007) – which includes agricultural exemptions
Roads
DEC wetlands
NWI wetlands
Elevation/slope (DEM 10-meter)
Break in slope
Streams/rivers
Surface water
Flood plain
Soils
DEC Natural Heritage Program habitat and species occurrences
Ag. districts
National register districts/sites
Green assets data for the ridge
Wallkill Valley Rail Trail alignment
Scenic roads (AKRF)
Scenic view points (AKRF)

To be digitized:

New Paltz Open Space Plan areas
Forest cover (at ~2-meter resolution)
Core farm areas
Forest blocks/patches
Parcels of contiguous ownership

Needed (*if existing*):

Protected lands: PDR/other easements
Aquifers/ recharge areas
Local habitat mapping (Hudsonia mapping of SwarteKill area not available until Fall 2008)
Local wetland mapping (Hudsonia mapping of village wetlands has already been requested)
Vernal pools
Century farms
Farm stands/CSAs
Local historic sites
Watershed boundaries
Northern Wallkill Study – biodiversity area boundaries

Clean Water and Open Space Preservation Commission Special Meeting February 27, 2008

Parcel Rating Results Presentation by Behan Associates

In Attendance: Seth McKee, Bob Gabrielli, Dennis Moore, Jim Hyland, Joan Barker, Marion Dubois, Brad Barkley, Christine Guarino (secretary), Melissa Barry (Behan Associates), Rick Lederer-Barnes (Behan Associates)

Absent: Cara Lee, Lynn Bowdery, David Jones, Fawn Tantillo,

Meeting Called to Order: 7:10 P.M.

Agenda

1. Review Parcel Rating Results

- Rating criteria have changed slightly (project viability and discretionary categories are new)
- There are differences in maximum points available for each rating category – is this related to the perceived value of each category? – The sub-categories allow for more detailed comparisons between projects vs. looking at a total score
- Results **not** based on actual discussion with landowners with regard to their intentions for the future use of their property
- Behan representatives reviewed maps of different land types and land use types and what the rating criteria are based on
- Parcels that score highly in experimental rating example score in all rating categories (Behan reviewed 2 large example parcels)
- Should steepness be considered? Since it is a constraint to building, it is a natural preservation component.

Breakdown of scoresheet for highest scoring example property was discussed as follows

Category 1 Working Farms

- Are there any farms that qualify as Bicentennial or Century farms? Should that criterion be removed from rating system? Should it be valued lower?
- Should there be credit given for sustainable farming practices? Should it be included in conservation practices section?
- Should a category be added to give credit to farmers who use their property as their primary source of income?

Category 2 – Water Resources

- Wetlands and buffer criteria will be discussed

Category 3 – Biodiversity and Ecological Resources

- No discussion

Category 4 – Scenic and Cultural Value

- Discussion to redefine criterion 4 (sensitive receptors) to include language about affecting the public interest...instead of referring to residential developments.
- Should there be a provision for parcels abutting places of local historic interest as well as national historic interest – perhaps 10 points perhaps just give credit for local historic value to this category
- Criterion 6 – should this be removed? Commission agrees to remove this.

Category 5 – Recreational and Educational Opportunities

- No discussion

Category 6 – Project Viability

- Should the number of points awarded for criterion 1 be a discretionary item?
- Should criterion 2 have a higher point value? Commission agrees to weight this category more.
- Commission discussed criterion 8 at length – should point value be increased and be divided into more increments? Criterion will be increased to 30 points and will be awarded at discretion of reviewer.

Category 7 – Discretionary Points

- No discussion

Summary

- * Working farms should not be compared with projects in different categories.
- * Application process needs to be discussed.
- * Title: Cooperative Conservation Program? Acceptable to commission? No – Please use CWOSP.
- * Seth suggests mailing an invitation to all landowners of parcels over a certain size (20 acres) to ascertain whether they are interested in conservation of their property and mail applications to those interested landowners that respond.
- * What type of application process should be used? Preliminary application deadline after which applications will be dealt with on a rolling basis.

Discuss Next Steps

- * Public outreach is responsibility of CWOSP (public meeting April 2, 2008).
- * Next meeting March 12, 2008 7:00, New Paltz Town Hall.

* Announcement of public meeting needs to be made – Seth will discuss with Cara and arrange to publicize.

* Behan will pull landowner addresses and change forms as discussed. Suggested that this information be made available on town website.

Adjourned: 9:25 p.m.

These minutes were respectfully submitted by Christine Guarino.

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Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission
Special Meeting
March 26, 2008

In Attendance: Cara Lee, Seth McKee, Lynn Bowdery, Dennis Moore, Jim Hyland, Joan Barker, Marion DuBois, Brad Barclay, Jim DeLaune, Christine Guarino (secretary)

Absent: Fawn Tantillo, Bob Gabrielli, David Jones

Meeting Called to Order: 7:10 P.M.

Announcement:

- Seth discussed the Farmland Protection Planning Grant kickoff meeting Monday March 31, 2008 at 7:00PM at Town Hall

Review changes to documents (Criteria, FAQ, Application)

- Lynn Bowdery found a few typos in documents

- Suggestions for corrections and clarifications will be e-mailed to Melissa Barry of Behan Associates after Lynn Bowdery compiles commission's suggestions through e-mail

- Cara will ask Melissa to highlight the changes that were made to the documents to ensure that prior suggested changes were made

Motion: Cara Lee made a motion that the formal name of this commission will henceforth be: The New Paltz Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission

Second: Jim DeLaune

Motion carried unanimously

Review changes to Public Presentation

- Commission reviewed slide presentation and any further changes will be sent to Behan Associates for inclusion in the final product

Script April 2nd meeting (Introductions, refreshments etc)

- Jim Hyland commenced discussion regarding what information will be gathered from meeting attendees in order to promote further contact with landowners and the commission

- Commission discussed options for keeping the lines of communication open with landowners

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- The Commission decided to have a sign-in sheet and Jim Hyland volunteered to encourage people to sign in
- Cara Lee suggests opening the meeting with an introduction of all commission members to personalize the process
- Then John Behan will go through the slide presentation and take questions
- The meeting will conclude with an informal question and answer session with refreshments and a table with relevant documents (FAQ, Summary, and Application) that will be staffed by Jim DeLaune and/or a consultant
- **Secretary** will make a sign in sheet for the meeting
- **Secretary** will make contact list of Commission member names and phone numbers

Additional Outreach between now and 4/2

- Commission members will call landowners with a previously expressed interest in conservation
- Commission members also discussed inviting members of the New Paltz Rod and Gun Club to the meeting

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Landowner Meeting: April 2, 2008 Deyo Hall 7:00 p.m.
Next Regular Meeting: April 9, 2008 7:00 p.m.

Adjourned: 8: 46 p.m.

These minutes were respectfully submitted by Christine Guarino

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Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission
Monthly Meeting
April 9, 2008

In Attendance: Cara Lee, Seth McKee, Lynn Bowdery, Dennis Moore, Joan Barker, Marion DuBois, Brad Barclay, Bob Gabrielli, Jim Hyland (7:40 p.m.), Christine Guarino (secretary)

Absent: Fawn Tantillo, David Jones, Jim DeLaune,

Meeting Called to Order: 7:10 P.M.

Debrief on landowner meeting

- 26 landowners attended the meeting as well as all CWOSP members
- All CWOSP members are satisfied with how the meeting and presentation went
- Melissa Barry of Behan Associates took a record of landowners' questions
- Some landowners seemed to be interested but may need more details and concrete information because they are somewhat unsure – follow-up with more detail would be advised
- Commission discussed focusing on parcels that are important for ecological reasons in addition to agricultural land in the future

Discuss next steps with landowners

- Cara Lee crafted a thank you letter that can be sent to landowners who attended the meeting to follow-up
- Commission suggested some changes to the letter that **Cara Lee** will make and she will send the letters to the landowners who attended the meeting
- Cara Lee proposed to analyze properties in terms of conservation value as well as the likelihood that the high priority properties may be feasible for easements
- Cara Lee suggested asking Behan Associates to make a map of parcels above 20 acres and a map of the character areas
- **Motion** - Seth McKee made a motion that if Behan Associates asks for payment for these maps, the Commission will request from Town Board up to \$5000 for mapping and analysis for setting priorities and ranking properties to implement the work of the Commission. The motion was seconded by Brad Barclay and passed unanimously

Update on Taliaferro and Bradley Farm appraisals

- Appraisal is behind schedule but Seth McKee expects to have it before May 1, 2008 and make the landowners an offer in time for the grant deadline
- NYS PDR grant must be reviewed and endorsed by Ulster County by May 1, 2008
- Cara Lee recommends that Open Space Institute also be contacted to see if these parcels match their criteria

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- **Motion**- Seth McKee made a motion to hire Nikki Koenig Nielson at \$50/hr to prepare the application for NYS PDR Grant for review by the County for these 2 properties (Taliaferro farm and Bradley Farm). The motion was seconded by Dennis Moore and passed unanimously.

- **Motion** - Brad Barclay made a motion that the Commission authorizes Seth McKee and Jim Hyland to present proposals to the above landowners based on appraisals after an executive session review by Commission. The motion was seconded by Dennis Moore and passed unanimously.

- **Motion** – A motion was made by Brad Barclay to begin the NYS PDR grant application process by submitting a proposal to Ulster County by May 1, 2008 upon receipt by the Commission of accepted proposals from above landowners. The motion was seconded by Cara Lee and passed unanimously.

Discuss a potential project

- Seth McKee spoke with Ray Curran about DOT's plan for a park 'n ride lot in northern end of New Paltz Auto's lot – it will be a bus stop for NYC bus and a shuttle to Poughkeepsie train station
- The parcel to the north has been for sale for some time – it is a parcel that the Commission may investigate due to its proximity to Tributary 13
- **Cara Lee** will do some research about this parcel and report back to the Commission

Brainstorm next steps overall

- Topic for May 14 meeting – rank the Taliaferro and Bradley properties
- Topic for June 11 meeting is to have a workshop on fundamentals of conservation easements
 - **Lynn Bowdery** will circulate some sample easements for the Commission to review
 - **Seth McKee** will provide some background on real estate
 - **Lynn Bowdery** will ask Chris Duncan to attend this meeting and share his expertise
- Open Space Institute will be invited to the July 9 meeting to network with CWOSP and see if the two groups share common goals

Next meeting May 14, 2008

Adjourned: 9:05 p.m.

These minutes were respectfully submitted by Christine Guarino.

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Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission
Monthly Meeting

May 14, 2008

In Attendance: Brad Barclay, Jim Hyland, Seth McKee, Lynn Bowdery, Marion DuBois, Bob Gabrieli, Jim DeLaune, David Jones, and alternate member Fawn Tantillo

Absent: Dennis Moore, Joan Barker, Cara Lee [?]

Meeting called to order: 7:15PM

Debriefing on the withdrawal of applicants for Farmland Protection Grants and PDR by CWOSP Commission: Jim Hyland thought that his applicants were not really ready to start the process, but that the owner of the land was not interested in selling to a developer. The parcel is not in danger of going out of farming soon, no sense of urgency. Seth said only that CWOSP might not have the money later. Brad said the owner should understand that if the property is inherited, estate taxes on the property could be too high to sustain farming. More leisurely discussions can be had concerning this parcel without the pressure of the grant deadline.

Regarding the other applicant, Seth said that the appraisal of \$11,000 per acre was relatively high, but the applicant did not think it was enough to meet their financial planning goals.

The members reviewed the list of land owners of parcels over 20 acres and identified the character areas the parcels were in.

There was a brief discussion of confidentiality and what is required for FOIL public information. Fawn Tantillo explained that at county they summarized emails to go in the minutes.

Members will try to have personal conversations with people we know who own parcels which would rate high on our priorities for preservation.

Seth will talk to Dennis Moore to develop publicity ideas for CWOSP, to increase public awareness.

The proposed Millbrook Preserve was discussed—its history and whether the CWOSP Commission should consider buying land to make the Preserve happen. There was no strong consensus of opinion.

Letterhead for the CWOSP Commission was discussed. It should have the Town seal on it. Seth will show some Open Space Committee letterhead to Dennis.

Bob Gabrieli left the meeting. The meeting continued without him to discuss the fact that he has himself made an application to the CWOSP Commission for a property he owns

on Dug Road. Fawn Tantillo asked if this was an occasion when she also should leave because she is not officially a commission member. [I have no record of whether she did leave or why] The remaining members discussed the issues involved—would Bob Gabrielli have to recuse himself from considering his own application. Jim DeLaune said that he should resign from the Commission because we must have absolute clarity and trust.

MOTION by Jim DeLaune: It is the policy of the Commission that it will not entertain any application by any Commission member.

SECOND by David Jones.

VOTE: All in favor.

There was a brief discussion about public access on lands protected with an easement purchased with public funds. Orange County makes it a requirement, but it is accomplished by a side agreement for access one day a year, by appointment only. Our law does not seem to require public access.

The meeting was adjourned at _____ [I didn't note the time. Sometime after 9 PM]

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Bowdery, CWOSP Commission Member

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Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission
Monthly Meeting
June 11, 2008

In Attendance: Cara Lee, Seth McKee, Joan Barker, Lynn Bowdery (8:05 p.m.), Marion DuBois, David Jones, Jim DeLaune, Christine Guarino (secretary)

Absent: Fawn Tantillo, Jim Hyland, Dennis Moore, Brad Barclay

Meeting Called to Order: 7:44 P.M.

Approval of May minutes

Motion - Jim DeLaune made a motion to approve the May minutes which was seconded by David Jones and carried unanimously.

1. Budget status
 - At this point the commission has spent a few thousand in appraisals, Behan Planning Associates, etc and Seth McKee estimates there is about \$55,000 remaining in the budget at this time but an exact figure will be available at the next meeting
2. Discussion of outreach for June 30, 2008 application deadline
 - A press release has been prepared and Cara Lee anticipates making announcements every few months
 - Reminder cards will also be mailed to the same people who were invited to the public meeting
 - Cara Lee wants to establish a system of prioritization of incoming projects
 - Jim DeLaune wrote a letter to the Culinarians' Home but hasn't yet heard from them
 - The Commission discussed parcels that would be considered by the Commission and Cara Lee brought up a potential project that may come before the Commission
 - Cara Lee mentioned that the Open Space Institute might visit with the Commission in July or August to discuss future projects
 - Cara Lee discussed the golf course on Huguenot Street and an updated wastewater treatment plant that may be sited downstream in the future
 - Cara Lee also discussed what is happening with the Harcourt Sanctuary
3. Update on applications received to date, expressions of interest, and other potential projects (we will NOT be reviewing applications until July)

Applications received:

- Bob Gabrielli application – 60 acres
- Palmateer application – 57 acres
 - These parcels are part of the Kleine Kill watershed which may be a compelling reason for easements
- There may be a project in the Millbrook Preserve
- Cara Lee proposes to discuss these applications in detail at the July meeting

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4. Discussion of mapping and planning needs

- Cara Lee and Seth McKee discussed a large-scale map with the help of Behan Associates that would show parcels and how they relate to the character areas, number the parcels and include a key, and shade the parcels that are 20 acres and above and the Commission would also receive a digital version
- The map from Behan Planning Associates should cost between \$300 and \$400

Motion – Jim DeLaune made a motion to approve the purchase of a map from Behan Associates, not to exceed \$500, which shows the above-specified layers. Cara Lee seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

5. Plan for July, August, and September meetings

- Next meeting: July 10, 2008 – Thursday
 - **Cara Lee** will invite a representative from OSI to meet with the Commission and discuss properties
 - Create a timeline of Commission's next steps and begin ranking properties
 - **Lynn Bowdery** offered to work with ranking a few properties as a useful exercise
- August – no meeting scheduled
- September – make a decision as to what will be recommended to the Town Board

6. In-service tutorial: real estate transactions and conservation easements

- Seth McKee provided an overview of the purchasing/easement process
- Lynn Bowdery explained the baseline fundamentals and showed a sample to the Commission

Adjourned: 9:54 p.m.

These minutes were respectfully submitted by Christine Guarino.