

Mohonk Preserve Testimonial Gateway Project -Resolution:

A motion was made by Councilman Torres to adopt the following resolution read aloud by Councilman Logan:

WHEREAS, the Mohonk Preserve, Inc. proposes to submit a Consolidated Funding Application to the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP “Parks Program”) for a grant under the Environmental Protection Fund and to the Green Infrastructure Grant Program (GIGP) of the Environmental Facilities Corporation, and the CFA application, if granted, will provide funding for a proposed trailhead project located in the Buttermilk Canaan Foothills (a.k.a. “Mohonk Preserve Foothills”) of the Shawangunk Ridge, a site located in the territorial jurisdiction of the Town of New Paltz, New York;

WHEREAS, as a requirement under the rules of these programs, said not- for –profit corporation must obtain the support of the governing body of the municipality in which the project will be locate;

WHEREAS, the Town of New Paltz supports the preservation of Open Space and has identified these lands as top priority for protection in the Town;

WHEREAS, the Town supports the Town’s Historic Preservation Commission’s goal of having a plan for the conservation and preservation of key historic resources, building on heritage and cultural resources of the Town, and Mohonk Preserve has worked with the Commission to support the designation the Testimonial Gateway and its surrounding landscape as a local historic landmark;

WHEREAS, the Town Board is aware that this project has been submitted to the Planning Board for SEQRA review and land use approvals, that a SEQRA lead agency will be established for coordinated environmental review of the project, and that further review by the Town will be conducted in regards to the proposed improvements, which will consider and evaluate the specific components of the project and the potential impacts that could result, both with respect to the environmental resources on the lands to be acquired by the Preserve and the surrounding lands that could be affected by the proposed project.

WHEREAS, there will be public participation throughout that process, including a public hearing on the proposed subdivision;

WHEREAS, the Town Board is aware that the CFA funding cycle requires submission of the application before that SEQRA process has concluded, that a complete environmental review of the land use applications must be conducted by the SEQRA Lead Agency before any authorization can be granted that would allow the proposed activities to be implemented, and that segmenting the environmental review of this CFA application would therefore be equally protective of the environment;

WHEREAS, the Town will continue to participate with the Mohonk Preserve and other stakeholders in the planning process for these lands, and, through the Town Planning Board, review specific actions proposed to make sure activities envisioned are consistent with the Town’s Open Space Plan, Farmland Preservation Plan, Comprehensive Plan and general zoning laws, and

WHEREAS, the Town Board recognizes that the Mohonk Preserve has continued to adhere to the commitments made beginning in 2012 to work collaboratively with the Town of New Paltz, including: 1) the work done by the Preserve in support of the designation of the Testimonial Gateway structure by the Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission; 2) meeting regularly with other stakeholders to gather formative neighborhood and community input on conceptual planning for the trailhead project; and 3) advancing other projects of mutual interest to plan for potential trail access linkages, such as the planning toward a potential “Flats Trail” connecting from the Wallkill River Bridge west across the Wallkill Flats;

WHEREAS, the Town Board recognizes the commitment of the Preserve to work collaboratively with the Town Board on issues of concern to the Town regarding the activities of the Preserve and the use of its lands, including traffic control, litter, and reduced tax base, consistent with the 2012 letter to the Supervisor from the Executive Director of the Preserve;

WHEREAS, the Town Board and the Preserve recognize that any conclusion with respect to the merits of the project itself would be premature, as the project undergo environmental review, and the specific plans and activities will evolve to address issues and concerns identified in the course of that review, but it is the sense of the Town Board that the project, as proposed, is generally consistent with the Town’s existing preservation goals and land use objectives, as reflected in the Town’s existing zoning, comprehensive and open space plans;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of New Paltz does hereby

1. For the limited purpose of allowing submission of the CFA application for consideration in the 2014 funding cycle, determine that this action should be segmented for purposes of SEQRA review, that full environmental review of the action will be conducted in the course of the land use approvals; that the CFA funding application does not have the potential to cause any significant adverse environmental impact on the environment, and that a negative declaration, limited to the CFA application itself, may be issued;
2. Express its general support for the proposed CFA application, recognizing that if the grant application is successful, those actions that will be funded pursuant to the application will be subject to the ongoing Town planning and review process noted above; and
3. Authorizes the Town Clerk to send a copy of this resolution to the Commissioner of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation in support of the submission of Mohonk Preserve’s CFA application for a grant under the Environmental Protection Fund.

Seconded by Councilman Logan for discussion.

Roll Call for the vote:

Supervisor Zimet-Aye

Councilman Barry-Nay

Councilman Torres-Aye

Councilman Logan-Aye

Motion carried.