

Town of New Paltz
Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission (CWOSP)
Approved Minutes, Meeting of November 13, 2019, at the Community Center

Members Present: Lynn Bowdery, Richard Fiesel, John Gotto, Michael Knutson, Cara Lee and Tom Weiner

Town Officials: Marty Irwin, Town Board Liaison

Public present: None

Minutes taken by: Lynn Bowdery, CWOSP Commission member and Secretary

1. Meeting called to order at: 7:08 PM by Chairman John Gotto

2. Public comments: None

3. Review and approve minutes of October meeting: The draft minutes of the October 9th meeting were presented. Tom Weiner said that his name was spelled correctly in one part and incorrectly in another part. John Gotto moved that they be approved with the spelling corrected. Richard Fiesel seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

4. Community Preservation Act – possible Open Space Plan revision/update: Chairman John Gotto reported that the Community Preservation Act (CPA) has still not been signed into law. Assuming that it will be signed into law, CWOSP and other commissions are going ahead to create a Community Preservation Plan (CPP). How can we revise and update our Open Space Plan to serve as a CPP in order to go forward? The CPP must be approved before the referendum which must be held in the November 2020 elections. The referendum on establishing the mortgage tax will entail a lot of work. The CPP must be done by August 2020. A Hudson Valley Greenway grant toward paying for work on a CPP has already been applied for, and we should know in December if New Paltz has won it. There will be a matching requirement of about 200 to 300 hours of volunteer time.

Cara Lee said that our Open Space Plan is a really good foundation for the CPP, and needs some specific elements in the required criteria for land acquisition to be a CPP. Behan Associates would be a very good choice to work on it, because they did the Open Space Plan and other things for New Paltz. They already have a lot of information and know the community. A CPP requires identified projects specific to parcels, this might be tricky. Cara will send everyone a link to information on the CPA and CPP.

Mike Knutson asked if choosing a consultant has to be a competitive bid process. Marty Irwin replied that for the Town professional services hiring can be based on qualifications and strong one-on-one negotiations.

Cara said that she and others were going tomorrow (Thursday, November 14) to the Scenic Hudson workshop in Newburgh for municipalities on CPA and CPPs. John is also going.

Mike asked if for homework we should look at the Open Space Plan and see what should be changed.

Cara said the historic preservation is also an element in the CPP and CWOSP should get in touch with the Town Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). John offered to contact the HPC chairman and set up a time to meet together.

Cara will circulate the text of the Greenway grant application to the CWOSP members by email.

5. Letters of Support: Town landfill solar project, Greenway Grant application: John reported that he submitted a letter of support to the Town for the Greenway grant application. Lynn Bowdery moved that we congratulate our team of Cara and John on their great job working with others to complete the grant application under a short deadline, and express our appreciation for their work. Mike seconded the motion. All voted enthusiastically in favor.

Town of New Paltz
Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission (CWOSP)
Approved Minutes, Meeting of November 13, 2019, at the Community Center

Cara asked if we could submit the CWOSP letter to the Town in support of the solar project on the Town's landfill property to the New Paltz Times. The ad-hoc solar project committee wants to have informative, supportive letters in the paper every week to build public support. Negotiations with the prospective developer, Sol Systems, are continuing and refining the plan with regard to the actual geography. They were asked to try to get more on the landfill and less on the forest. The Town's Solar Law is moving along.

6. New information on County-owned parcels: John reported on his emails seeking information on the County-owned parcels east of North Ohioville Road. Our County Legislator Jim DeLaune is working to get people who know about this to tell CWOSP about the County's interest in the parcels.

7. Update on ongoing business: Tom Weiner reported that he took another look at his parcel of preservation interest and is still not sure if there is any agricultural activity there. He looked at the DEC interactive map viewer, and it is on a fringe area—maybe he could add another 10 points to its score.

Cara has not been able to contact the owner of another property of interest. She knows someone who knows the owner and will see if she can help.

Cara also happened to meet a person at a party whose family owns a 100-acre property and is interested in somehow preserving their land. Cara will try to get in touch with that person to follow-up on possible land preservation.

8. New business: None. We should plan for moving forward, review the Open Space Plan and the requirements for a CPP.

9. Adjournment: Mike Knutson moved that the meeting be adjourned. Tom Weiner seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00PM.

Our next meeting will be December 11, 2019. This is the **second** Wednesday.

Attachments:

November 7, 2019 letter in support of Greenway grant application

November 15, 2019 letter to the Editor re: solar project on the Town's landfill property

Town of New Paltz
Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission (CWOSP)
Approved Minutes, Meeting of November 13, 2019, at the Community Center



Hudson River Valley Greenway
Planning Grant Application, Town of New Paltz
November 7, 2019

The Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission of the Town of New Paltz would like to express our strong support of the Town application for a New York State Hudson River Greenway Planning Grant, November 7, 2019. The Town intends to use the requested funding for the preparation of a revised and updated Open Space Plan, with the goal of guiding and facilitating our continuing efforts to preserve and protect open space resources.

The Town of New Paltz has undertaken pioneering preservation work, in accordance with its 2006 Open Space Plan. The ballot referendum at that time to provide a funding mechanism for open space protection was approved by a wide margin, and there has been a strong record of success since then, often in partnerships between the Town and non-profit organizations that recognize similar goals. The mission of CWOSP is completely consistent with and complementary to the Hudson River Valley Greenway program, and the Town of New Paltz would welcome the opportunity to sustain and improve our preservation efforts, starting with an expanded and updated Open Space Plan.

If anything, the recognition of the value of protecting properties of historic, agricultural, and environmental importance has only increased, while development pressures on local properties have increased at the same time. It is well established that the Town's quality of life for residents and the economic benefits to our tourism and agricultural economy are both enhanced by the preservation of properties that meet defined criteria of significance. The Town would greatly benefit by updating and revising that Plan, drawing upon past experience with preservation projects, recognizing new opportunities as well as new threats, and incorporating new sources of information and changing circumstances. We sincerely hope that the grant will be awarded so that these valuable preservation efforts can continue in a thoughtful, rational, well-defined process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Gotto", written over a light blue horizontal line.

John Gotto
Chairman, CWOSP

Town of New Paltz
Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission (CWOSP)
Approved Minutes, Meeting of November 13, 2019, at the Community Center

November 15, 2019

The Town of New Paltz Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission CWOSP) has submitted a letter to the Town Board in support of a proposed solar energy project at the Town landfill property. We recognize the need for increasing reliance on renewable, non-polluting energy, and the landfill site, already owned by the Town, presents a good location for a solar facility. The lease of the site will provide a stream of needed revenue to the Town while reducing the consumption of fossil fuel energy. We recognize that the proposed project could necessitate some clearing of existing forest at the site to augment the area of the capped landfill. Our committee concluded that while loss of a forested area is generally not desirable, a strong case has been made for use of this site, due to the clean energy benefits it will provide, its proximity to existing heavy industrial activity at the County Waste Transfer Station and the relatively small scale of the discreet forest patch that will be impacted. CWOSP has a high awareness and sensitivity to the need for preserving land and water resources, and we view the proposed project, on balance, as a beneficial use of the property that is consistent with our mission.



John Gotto

Chairman, CWOSP