

Town of New Paltz
Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission (CWOSP)
Approved Minutes, Meeting of Wednesday, April 28, 2021, via Zoom

Members present: Lynn Bowdery, Rich Fiesel, John Gotto, Mike Knutson, Cara Lee, Tom Weiner

Town Officials: None

Public present: None

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

1. Meeting called to order at: 7:03 PM by Chairman John Gotto

2. Public comments: None

3. Review and approve minutes of the March 24, 2021 meeting: After a brief discussion about minor changes to the minutes, Tom Weiner moved to approve the minutes with those changes. Rich Fiesel seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

4. Discussion of future CWOSP meeting schedule: Chairperson John Gotto started by saying that CWOSP's mission is completely overlapped by the Community Preservation Fund Advisory Board (CPFAB); only funding availability is an issue. The CPFAB is the first stop and CWOSP can help make a project more feasible. There is no need to dismantle CWOSP- we can keep going on stand-by basis.

Cara Lee said that the work done by CWOSP has been helpful to inform things to be done by the CPFAB. There is value in continuing to meet and stay engaged with CPFAB.

John added that it will be good to stay abreast and help as needed. We have a legal obligation to meet at least bi-monthly. Cara agreed with John's take on the situation.

There was a discussion on how to make the meetings more engaging for the members. Cara suggested doing some meetings as field trips followed by discussions and social time.

John Gotto moved that CWOSP proceed to have only bi-monthly meetings, starting with the next meeting on the 4th Wednesday of June, 2021. Mick Knutson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

5. Additional things: As an exercise, John had done a CWOSP type scoring of the highest rated parcel in the Community Preservation Plan parcel ratings, the Coppersea property on Springtown Road. John scored it at 186 points only using resources available before the Natural Resources Inventory was done. Mike's analysis gave it 216 points. They average out at about 200 points, twice the points for the parcel analysed last month. This shows the value of having people who evaluate parcels rather than an automatic rating based on yes or no status of particular attributes. Judgement counts. The CPP is weighted to habitat values; CWOSP to agriculture. CPP doesn't assess vulnerability. Local knowledge counts. Mike has pointed out these issues in the CPP balance. Cara said that the scoring system is a place to start. Lynn filled in the Planning Board history with the Coppersea parcel, including the lawsuits and legal precedent established.

Cara reported that the CPFAB invited people from Scenic Hudson to talk about how Scenic Hudson does their land acquisition process. Next month they will meet with Wallkill Valley Land Trust (WVLT), then with Open Space Institute (OSI), getting to know our partners.

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John asked if CWOSP had an interest in sitting in on the CPFAB meeting with WVLT. No conclusion noted.

Cara explained that CPFAB is spending this year learning about what and how to do things. Cara gave a presentation on the New Paltz Farmland Preservation Plan, and looked at what has already been done by CWOSP, from already prepared summaries. She also reported that the Real Estate Transfer Tax brought in \$16,000 in March; she attended a talk at Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress- "Is the Hudson Valley Sold Out?" A friend of hers passed on that at a lobbying event she heard a NYS senator say that it was wonderful that New Paltz had a CPF and was helping other towns. The next CPFAB meeting will be May 25, the 4th Tuesday, on Zoom.

Lynn asked if there was a way of getting a notification if a particular parcel was up for sale. Cara said she looked at the real estate listings- for example, she noticed an interesting parcel for sale on Portuese Lane. Lynn said she had been wondering about a parcel that was adjacent to Mill Brook Preserve. Cara said she would look into it, had a possible contact. Lynn also asked about another development adjacent to Mill Brook Preserve. Cara said she and Jim DeLaune would be talking to the developer.

Rich Fiesel suggested having one of CWOSP's meetings at an orchard or farm, possibly getting the owners interested in land preservation.

Mike moved to adjourn the meeting. Lynn seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

The next meeting will be June 23, 2021.