

**Town of New Paltz**  
**Clean Water and Open Space Protection Commission (CWOSP)**  
**Approved Minutes, Meeting of February 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

**Guest:** Christine DeBoer, Executive Director, Wallkill Valley Land Trust (WVLT)

**Public present:** None

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

**1. Meeting called to order at:** 7:04 PM by Chairman John Gotto

**2. Public comments:** None.

**3. Review, amend, and approve minutes of previous meetings:** The draft minutes from the May 15th, 2018 Solar Law Meeting, jointly with other Town and Village committees and boards; the July 11, 2018 meeting; and the November 14, 2018 meeting were briefly discussed. Cara Lee moved that the three minutes be approved as submitted. Richard Fiesel seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**4. Membership Issues:** Chairman John Gotto reached out to the two people who had expressed an interest in joining CWOSP Comm., and they both said they were no longer interested. John also asked Dan Porter if he would be interested in joining, but hasn't heard from him yet. John presented our membership issue to the Town Board, the difficulty of having meetings with the quorum of six people required by the membership as set at 11 when we have so many empty positions. Right now we have only 6 members, so everyone must be present in order to have a quorum. He requested that the law establishing the commission be amended to change the number of members from eleven to seven. He reported that the Town Board is working on it. We discussed whether we could have alternate members, in case there were more than seven people interested in serving on the Commission. Marty Irwin will look into that possibility.

**Not on the agenda:** Cara Lee reported that the Solar Law Committee will be meeting next Tuesday (Feb. 19) with Audrey Friedrichsen of Scenic Hudson to advise on mitigations for large projects. They have determined that the Town of New Paltz does own the capped landfill and they are working of a Request for Proposals (rfp) to rent the land for a solar development. Meanwhile, tariffs have raised the cost of solar panels. Richard Fiesel mentioned that he noticed in Dix Hills on Long Island there is a park-and-ride lot covered with solar panels. Cara said there was a possibility for solar at the County Fair Grounds.

Cara also reported that the Town of Gardiner Open Space Committee is reinvigorated and contacted her about learning from CWOSP. Cara and Lynn Bowdery met with them at their meeting on January 14. They are concerned with the town holding conservation easements due to recent development projects. They were advised to get the Open Space Committee involved in development review from the outset, involved in the planning of the subdivision. They are looking at a real estate transfer tax provision to provide funding for conservation easements and land acquisition. The Town of Red Hook was able to get state authorization for such transfer tax. Cara suggested looking at it together and working with WVLT. Also discussed was prioritizing projects and guidelines. Cara advised them to flesh out a process before trying make acquisition.

**5. WVLT presentation - Christine DeBoer - discussion of potential collaboration with CWOSP:**

Christie presented a recap of the Taliaferro Farm conservation easement project, the successful collaboration of the Town, Ulster County, Scenic Hudson, and WVLT. She said that a new County Executive might not be open to using the county's Open Space Farmland Fund. She added that lots of farmers are interested in purchase of development rights, but it is hard to find the money. She would like talk to CWOSP on a routine basis to see what is happening and how to align our goals. She reported that WVLT got a grant to do some scenic roads mapping, and DEC is working on some more detailed

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mapping, and by the way, tomorrow (Feb. 14) at the Watershed Omelette the talk will be about the DEC map project. WVLT is working on a conservation easement on a parcel on N. Ohioville Road. WVLT would like to know what town-owned conservation easements there are in Ulster County, also easements held by other entities, so that we can know what lands are protected already in the county. This information is not readily available.

Cara brought up the possibility of the Town of New Paltz not wanting to hold conservation easements. There are always lots of moving parts with town-held easements. Lynn asked if the Town of Shawangunk was interested. WVLT and Scenic Hudson are working with them. Cara suggested that we ask the people from the Town of Red Hook to do a workshop on the real estate transfer tax. There was general approval of the idea, should we move forward? Cara said we should find out more about how Red Hook got their transfer tax authorization from the N Y State Legislature. Mike Knutson will ask Carrie Watkin-Bates at Scenic Hudson about what she knows about this. Cara said we should know if this funding stream is possible before starting to work with others to get it. Christie wondered who are the people we are not talking to?

**6. CWOSP input to EnCB proposal for Town CEA designations:** CWOSP is invited to provide input and support. We agreed after a brief discussion that the EnCB's proposal would add protections to the Town's natural resources and open space. Mike moved that CWOSP provide a letter of support to the EnCB approving the Draft CEA plan. Tom Weiner seconded the motion. All voted in favor. John Gotto will draft a letter and send it around for comments. Lynn will talk to Ingrid Haekel about possibly adding other areas of value.

**7. Possible easements for path to Mill Brook Preserve from Moriello Pool:** We looked at some maps of the area in question that showed property lines. Lynn explained that what looks like a long extension from a property to the west of Mill Brook Preserve (MBP) is just a mapping error in Ulster County Parcel Viewer. Examination of the metes and bounds in the deeds of some of the properties adjacent to the map shape indicate that the properties are bounded by Mill Brook (Tributary 13) and not an extension from another property. John posed the question, can we help create a path to MBP from town property? It appears that it can't be by using the map entity that looks like a bent finger extending from the parcel adjacent to MBP. If an easement through that parcel and the adjacent property could be obtained, that might work to provide access from the Town's property via Cooper Street. John will report to MBP, Inc. Cara will try to arrange a meeting with the owner of the adjacent parcel, to sound out her intentions for the parcel.

**8. Adjournment:** Mike Knutson moved the meeting be adjourned. Cara seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Our next meeting will be March 13, 2019. (As of Feb. 25, John proposed to move the meeting to March 20- no clear decision as of March 1)