

Town of New Paltz
52 Clearwater Road, PO Box 550
New Paltz, NY 12561



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Town of New Paltz To Do Community Survey on Open Space and Historic Preservation

New Paltz – The Town of New Paltz announced a new community survey today. The Town will conduct the survey to determine what New Paltz residents consider as open space and historic preservation priorities for the community in the future. The survey is designed to explore protection of the community’s open spaces, recreational assets, habitats, farmland and historic features. It is the first step in updating the Town’s Open Space Plan, written in 2006, and integrating it with its inventory of historic landmarks and features.

The survey is available online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/NewPaltzSurvey. Responses are due by April 30.

Planning for the survey began in recent months, led by the Town Environmental Conservation Board, Clean Water Open Space Preservation Commission, and Historic Preservation Commission. Emergence of the coronavirus crisis has underscored the importance and value of New Paltz’s local parkland, open spaces, and historic sites, which many residents are actively using amidst efforts at social-distancing. This survey will help the Town in planning for current and future needs.

“We are encouraging people to take this 3-minute survey, to help inform the Town’s planning for the future protection and stewardship of the natural and historic features that define New Paltz’s unique character,” said Neil Bettez, New Paltz Town Supervisor.

“New Paltz has a good track record of protecting important places, but we know we need to do more to ensure that our most precious open spaces and historic properties are here for future generations,” said Bettez. “New Paltz residents have benefited in very tangible ways from our 2006 Open Space Plan, which focused attention on the places people value most in our community,” he added. The plan resulted in projects such as protection of the Taliaferro Farm; expansion of the Millbrook Preserve; and the designation of the Mohonk Testimonial Gateway and Putt Corners Burial Ground as Town of New Paltz landmarks. It also helped inspire the River to Ridge Trail and The Empire Trail.

New Paltz’s extraordinary cultural history is captured in homes, businesses, farms and properties that are the foundations of our unique community character. “The richness of New Paltz’s natural resources, and historic/architectural features contribute to New Paltz’s small-town flavor, aesthetic beauty, sense of place and quality of life enjoyed by those who live, work or visit here,” said John Orfitelli, chair of the Town of New Paltz Historic Preservation Commission. “We are eager to create a plan that brings together a vision for our natural landscapes and built environment,” he added.

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New Paltz's abundant wetlands and forests provide clean water and fresh air and are nature's first lines of defense and resilience to climate impacts such as flooding and heat. "As we take further steps toward being a Climate Smart Community, protection of our natural resources that can curb the impacts of climate change is critical," said Janelle Peotter, Coordinator for New Paltz Climate Smart.

Our region is a growing magnet for commerce, culture, investment, and relocation, and is an oasis for the arts, farm-fresh food, craft beverages, historic sites and living close to nature. As the population continues to grow and suburbanize, it is increasingly important to define a vision and goals for the future of the New Paltz community. Consolidating development in our center is one strategy. Equally important is creating priorities for protecting outlying natural areas such as the Shawangunk Mountains, forests, wildlife corridors, wetlands near the Wallkill and Swartekill Rivers, working landscapes including farms and forests, cultural and recreational resources, historic places and scenic corridors, trails, and public access.

For more information, call Kathy Preston at 845-255-0604x1

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