

Minutes, Gardiner Open Space Commission Meeting, Dec. 10, 2018.

Attending: Jean-Ann McGrane, Rebecca Benner, Kay Hoiby, Linda Geary, Kellie George, Laura Rose.

Quotes:

One touch of nature makes the whole world kin. --William Shakespeare

Wilderness is not a luxury but a necessity of the human spirit. --Edward Abbey

Discussion of Minutes

1. *Do we need to vote on and approve our minutes?*

Agreed we should, as we are subject to FOIL.

Also agreed they should be submitted to Marybeth Majestic and posted on the town's website.

2. Last meeting's minutes unanimously approved: Becca made the motion to approve, Laura R seconded.

3. We will wait for everyone to be present to vote on all past meetings' minutes.

Report back from the Town of Gardiner's (TOG) Inter-Board Meeting, Dec. 4, 2018

- Jean, Kay, Linda and Laura R attended.

Take home message from the meeting:

-There is value in joint planning, communication and cooperation.

Discussed:

-The town's challenge of supporting density development in the Hamlets, including expanding sewage treatment, and creating a town water system.

-Having representatives from our group attend the scheduled Jan. 8, 2019 meeting. Sterling Environmental to consult with the Town Board on Gardiner's *Environmental Conservation Commission's* (ECC) Aquifer Overlay District proposal.

- Communicating directly with the ECC to see where our goals may intersect or inform each other's work. *Jean will reach out to their chair.*

Environmentally Related Activity in the Town

-This was a new item on our agenda. There was mixed opinion as to whether or not we should devote time to this. No consensus was reached.

Discussed:

-The October 6th, 2018 fuel oil spill at the Ranch.

-Communicating with each other at our meetings about the town's current events, especially environmental and controversial planning issues.

Conservation Easement Follow up - Linda Geary/ NYS Law:

-Linda printed out copies of the 2015 NYS Environmental Conservation Law, Article 49, which covers conservation easements. This will help inform any recommendations we will make to the town.

Town of Gardiner:

- Linda also brought in the deeds for two Town owned properties.

Either or both might provide public access to the Walkkill.

Locations: Sand Hill Road (SBL: 100.2-2-43) and Old Ford (94.1-1-44.)

Outreach to Towns and Organizations:

Scenic Hudson - Jean McGrane

- Spoke with Seth McKee from Scenic Hudson and would like to invite him to meet with us to speak about his organization's work, and to get his input on ours.

We agreed that we are interested, however we discussed that having Seth come right now might pull us away from the goals we've agreed to work on first.

-Agreed to ask him to come in the Spring.

-Jean will write something to begin to point us towards a list of recommendations we will make to the town for conservation easements:

- currently owned,

- in the process of being acquired,

- being proposed to the town and

-land and projects the town may choose to take on in the future.

Town of New Paltz - Rebecca Benner

Becca spoke with Cara Lee, a 20-year veteran of the Town of New Paltz's Open Space Commission.

-Cara shared a draft of *The Town of New Paltz's Clean Water Open Space Protection Program*, which describes their program and some of their accomplishments. She also shared a chart of their targets, and the projects they've accomplished to meet them.

-The Town of New Paltz's Open Space plan was prepared by Behan Planning Associates, as ours was. Theirs was completed in 2006, ours in 2007. They've done an update of their plan, with Behan, which they've found helpful. One recommendation was to consider hiring them to help us focus in on the right parcels to choose for conservation.

-We discussed whether there is money in the budget for this, and if we're ready for this step.

-Cara said that New Paltz has a multi-step process for reviewing each proposed conservation easement, including:

- reviewing whether it's a high conservation priority, in keeping with their Open Space Plan,

- consulting with and gaining the cooperation of the Walkkill Valley Land Trust, who New Paltz contracts with to monitor each conservation easement. (She said the town has chosen not to take on the responsibility of baseline documentation, monitoring or enforcement.)

- evaluating the need for and accessibility of funding for the project.

This list is incomplete, we plan to learn more about their steps. -

-Cara said there might be opportunities for working jointly with the New Paltz group. She suggested that the Shawangunk Mountain Regional Open Space plan might inform a joint project. <http://mtnscenicbyway.org/images/openspaceplan.pdf>

- Cara will be invited to our next meeting, so we can ask for her input about our group's work.

Town of Shawangunk - Kay Hoiby

Kay

- Spoke with Jane Roscoe, the Town Clerk of Shawangunk.

- Reviewed Planning Board and EMC minutes to get the gist of their promotion and handling of conservation easements.

- Was given contact info for Dave Halderman, Chair of Shawangunk's *Environmental Management Council* (EMC).

From her research, Kay reported the following:

1. Shawangunk accepts and monitors their own easements.

2. The EMC does the initial assessment of any proposed easement for the Town. Their baseline report is required before the Planning Board will sign off on the Final Plat for projects with conservation easements.

Kay will find out more about how they make their recommendations to the Planning Board as well as how they create their mapping and conduct baseline assessments.

Monitoring: Each member of the EMC is assigned one or two properties to monitor annually. They are currently monitoring 12 properties total.

Although there have been no violations to date, these would be referred to the building inspector for further action.

Follow-up questions to the Town of Shawangunk should include:

- What training do EMC members receive in order to conduct initial environmental evaluations and ongoing monitoring?

- Does the town have money set aside for legal fees, if needed? Do they carry insurance for enforcement?

Laura Wong Pan's Report:

Laura couldn't attend tonight, however she sent each member extensive information about conservation in the Town of Warwick.

Next Steps:

Continue to reach out to surrounding towns.

- Kay to recontact Shawangunk. She is scheduled to meet with Dave Halderman and Kris Pederson in January. Kris is also on the EMC and was on their Planning Board for several years.

- Laura R to contact Red Hook,
- Jean to contact Town of Crawford,
- Laura WP to report on Warwick.

- Invite Cara Lee to our next meeting.

- Jean to follow up on beginning to clarifying the next steps for our recommendations to the Town around conservation easements.

- Jean to reach out to Gardiner's ECC.

- Laura R to continue work on the Gardiner conservation easement database.

Next Meeting: January 14, 2019 at Town Hall, 5-6:30 PM.

Quotes: Kay

Snacks: Kelly