

New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission (OSPC) Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 22, 2024, 6:30 p.m., Sessions Conference Room, New Hartford Town Hall

Members Present: Doug Roth (chairperson), Eva Barham, Bill Michaud, Madeline McClave, Mary Hoag (alternate), Jean Darlington (secretary). Absent: Karen Griswold-Nelson, Rusty Warner. Doug called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and seated Mary as a regular member in place of Karen.

Approval of 12/18/2023 minutes: Eva moved to approve the minutes of the 12/18/2023 meeting. Jean seconded and the motion passed 4-0 (Bill and Mary abstained).

Open Space Plan:

- Doug reported that Jean had emailed pdf's of all the Conservation Easements (CE) on Town-owned open space lands to OSPC members. These documents can be found in the Town land records. Doug recommended that we reference these documents by their official record numbers in the next update of the Open Space Plan. Jean volunteered to draft a short summary of each CE to include in the Open Space Plan, and possibly to post on the Town website for public information.
- Doug noted that P&Z's work on the Town Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) should be starting soon. We discussed the need for POCD to continue including references to the Open Space Plan, as it did 10 years ago and 20 years ago.

Updates on Current Open Space Preserves and Trails:

Goula Preserve: Doug displayed a trail map that he had created of existing pathways, including the official hiking trail, old farm roads, and unauthorized ATV/dirt bike paths. We discussed suitable routes for a possible new authorized hiking trail and a management strategy for an approximately 1-acre field that is in the early successional phase and has become overgrown with invasive plants. Doug volunteered to organize a walk to investigate the hiking trail possibilities.

Phillips Farm: We discussed the first draft of a Stewardship Plan that Doug had prepared. He volunteered to email an editable version to members to work on and discuss at our next meeting (2/26). We also discussed reviewing the terms of the CE with the landowner.

Jones Mountain: No report on conditions at Jones Mountain preserve. Madeline reported on planned invasive species control activity (Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, HWA) on adjacent New Hartford Land Trust (NHLT) lands with the help of HWA expert [Carole Cheah](#). (This control activity was done jointly by NHLT and OSPC at the Town-owned Jones Mountain Preserve in 2021.)

Helen Butler Riverfront Trail Preserve: Madeline reported that NHLT had performed its required inspection visit at the end of 2023. The inspection noted items that OSPC has discussed before, especially the need to block off unauthorized pathways down the riverbank and the need to post small arrows indicating authorized river access points.

Land Preservation Fund (LPF): No report.

Agricultural Review: No report.

Other Business: We discussed coordinating stewardship activities with the Conservation Commission. We discussed the setup and posting of OSPC agendas.

Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate: At 7:43 p.m., Jean moved to enter executive session. Bill seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Executive session ended at 7:55 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Darlington, Secretary