

Minutes of New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission

Regular Meeting: Monday, 7/24/2017, 6:30 p.m., New Hartford Town Hall, Sessions Conference Room

Members present: Jean Cronauer (Chairperson), Karen Griswold-Nelson, Madeline McClave, Caren Ross, Bill Michaud, Jean Darlington (Secretary).

At 6:33 p.m., Jean C. explained that because the agenda was published after the due date, we were not able to make motions or take votes. Therefore, these minutes only summarize the discussion.

Public comment: none

Approval of Meeting Minutes: postponed until next meeting

Brodie to Barella Road Trail Plans: On July 6, several members of the OSPC walked into the abandoned section of Barella Road from Winchester Road with First Selectman Dan Jerram and Conservation Commission member Gwen Ashbaugh, who is a landscape architect. We looked at the large washout that occurred about 15 years ago and discussed ways to make possible a stable hiking trail through or around that section. Dan said he would contact the town's surveyor to identify the boundaries of the Town's right-of-way. Then some of the OSPC members and Gwen walked to the State of CT land beside Marsh Road. We considered ways for hikers to cross Cedar Swamp Brook, which is much higher and wider now than it was last year during the drought. Jean D. has been working on making contact with the CT DEEP about 1) the possibility of posting blazes through State property and 2) the possibility of adding a small bridge or some large rocks to make the stream crossing easier for hikers.

Natural Resources Inventory (NRI): Jean C. reported that Alison Murdock, chairperson of the Conservation Commission, is working with an individual to get the NRI completed. Madeline volunteered to call Ken Geissler.

Trail Mapping: The Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) is working on an interactive trail map website for the Northwest Hills Council of Governments (COG). Madeline volunteered to contact them to see how that project is progressing.

State/Town Budget Update: Most small towns had ECS funding cut by 60-70%. We do not know when New Hartford will have a budget.

Regional Plan of Conservation and Development: Jean C. and Karen G-N attended the COG meeting. They reported on the Plan's efforts to balance the needs of towns with differing socioeconomic profiles. Rick Lynn of the COG has been coordinating outreach to towns. The top goals of the Plan are to attract and retain young residents, protect water and other natural resources, support agriculture, maintain and improve the vitality of town centers and main streets, meet the needs of elderly residents, and foster regional collaboration.

Land Preservation Fund: Bill Michaud plans to investigate in depth the specifics of the sources of money into the Fund in the new few weeks. He plans to work with Town Clerk Donna LaPlante.

Other Business: Madeline reported on New Hartford Land Trust events: The program on bats with speaker Geri Griswold went very well. On August 2 at 9:00 a.m., there will be a kayaking expedition and presentation about water quality on West Hill Pond. On August 19, Eloise Farmer and Karen Meares will run a workshop on pressing and preserving flowers.

Next regular meeting August 28, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Darlington, Secretary