

**Minutes of New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission (OSPC) Regular Meeting  
Monday, September 27, 2021 6:30 p.m., Sessions Conference Room, Town Hall**

**Members present:** Doug Roth (chairman), Bill Michaud, Madeline McClave, Karen Griswold-Nelson, Rusty Warner, Jean Darlington (secretary), Eva Barham (alternate). **Guest:** Steve Worthington. Doug called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Doug seated Eva as a regular member for this meeting.

**Approval of minutes:** Jean moved to accept the minutes of the August 23, 2021 regular meeting. Madeline seconded. Bill requested that the last sentence of page 1, which continues onto page 2, mention the term “cluster housing.” Jean suggested the following amendment (see bold italics): “For example, subdivisions with 2+ acre zoning can create habitat fragmentation, whereas close neighborhoods with smaller lots and large areas of contiguous open space for residents to enjoy (***as in cluster housing***) are better for environmental conservation and wildlife corridors.” Madeline moved to accept the minutes as amended, Bill seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Updates on current open space preserves and trails:**

**Helen Butler Riverfront preserve:** We discussed ideas to add to the Management Plan as a Best Management Practices addendum or internal working document to address specific invasive species, specific erosion issues, etc. Karen emphasized the importance of observing the 100-foot setback regulations of the Planning & Zoning and Inland Wetlands Commissions. Permits may be needed if erosion control methods are to involve any built structures. Madeline stated that she is in the process of organizing another meeting with First Selectman Dan Jerram and the chairperson of the Conservation Commission and OSPC to walk the trail again to discuss management issues and the management plan. Bill and Steve volunteered to work together during the next week to create specific plans before that meeting. Madeline said the NHLT is organizing an educational session with invasive species expert Tom Zetterstrom for volunteers about controlling Japanese knotweed and other invasives. We discussed ideas for recruiting more volunteers for work parties on this and other town open space land. Karen said people need to be educated about the purpose of open space and about citizens’ roles in protecting the environment. Rusty recommended that we collaborate with the Farmington River Coordinating Committee (FRCC). Madeline said the NHLT 2022 annual meeting may focus on the Wild and Scenic Farmington River and riparian corridors (it had been canceled in 2020 because of the pandemic).

**Goula preserve:** The town has been mowing pathways around the field. Madeline will call Christine Hayward to coordinate ideas about the timing and extent of mowing. We discussed creating a management plan for this preserve.

**Jones Mountain preserve:** Bill volunteered to walk there this weekend and talk to others who have volunteered there to work on the management plan. Madeline said she plans to set up a session for Paul Mahoney and Bill Michaud to transfer to other volunteers their knowledge and experience working at Jones Mountain.

**Phillips Farm:** Doug said the beginning of the trail could use a bog bridge. He also said there is some erosion in places on old farm roads.

**Summary chart and information for town website:** Jean handed out the latest version of a draft of a summary of facts and figures regarding each of the town’s four open space preserves. Members volunteered to read it and email any edits to her so that a correct working document can be ready for OSPC members at the next meeting. Madeline volunteered to send Jean a PowerPoint presentation with information in a format suitable for the town website.

**Review of funding sources for open space preservation:** Madeline presented details about the key funding sources and assistance for open space preservation, such as the CT DEEP’s OSPA program, the Trust for Public Land, the federal Highlands Act, and the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust program. Next month she will present about funding sources that are specific to trails and farmland. She said she would write up a summary.

**Work on updating Open Space Plan:** Members volunteered to work on various outdated sections of the Plan and email them to Jean to incorporate into the revised Plan before the next meeting.

**New business:**

1) Karen described a Zoom meeting this Thursday evening at the **NW Council of Governments (NWCOG)** regarding watershed and lake health, climate change, social justice, and related matters. She will share the recording with interested OSPC members.

2) Jean announced the **October 9th Nature/History walk at the Franklin P. Kearney Memorial Nature Trail**, which she is helping to lead with Town Historian Anne Hall, Conservation Commission Chairperson Alison Murdock, and Recreation Commission member Jeremy Schaller.

(<https://www.newhartfordct.gov/community-business/events/68516>.) To sign up, members of the public can *click here to sign up for the hike*:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScU9l8xuJeq8Zp0ZLWw7dli3psQqmFH2iffwUuZ9Lnk1y6nqA/viewform> or send an email to [newhartfordhiker@gmail.com](mailto:newhartfordhiker@gmail.com).)

Next meeting: Monday, October 25, 2021, 6:30 p.m., New Hartford Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Darlington, Secretary