

Town of New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission
Meeting Minutes – February 23, 2015

Members Present: Jean Cronauer, Jean Darlington, Karen Griswold-Nelson, Madeline McClave, Caren Ross.

Chair Jean Cronauer called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Caren Ross moved, Jean Darlington seconded, and all except Karen Griswold-Nelson voted to approve the February 11, 2015, special meeting minutes as amended (remove Griswold-Nelson from attendance list, change wording of IV.). Griswold-Nelson abstained as she was not present at the December meeting.

II. Lots of Record

Members discussed several issues related to the OSPC's draft, proposed Lots of Record policy. Madeline McClave reported on her brief conversation with Beth Paul, Town Assessor, about the policy and scheduling a meeting. Beth said that she could call some colleagues in other towns to get additional information on how others handle this. Cronauer said that she, Bill Michaud and McClave will have a full meeting with Beth as soon as possible after Michaud returns from out of town. McClave said she felt the policy draft needs more background and explanatory language at the top of the proposed policy to explain the rationale for it in terms that anyone can understand. She will work on that. Cronauer noted that Michaud is working on writing up some different scenarios for the numbers in the policy.

III. Updates for 2015 POCAD

Cronauer reported on her conversations with Steve Sadlowski, Land Use Staff, Ted Stoutenberg, Chair of Planning & Zoning (P&Z) and Jim Steadman, former Chair of P&Z. She explained to them that OSPC would like to update the relevant sections of the 2005 POCD rather than revise Steve's draft. She also asked them why the process has changed. She said that she communicated to the Chair of the Conservation Commission that we would like to discuss the OSPC's perspective and updates to the Plan so that our comments and input will be aligned with one another, if feasible.

Cronauer led the group in reviewing the relevant sections of the 2005 Plan, the revisions we have already provided, and Steve's draft to begin figuring out how to weave these together. She will work on coming up with an integrated draft by end of next week. Some key issues discussed included the multiple definitions of various types of land (McClave to discuss with Steve along with map issues; also need to discuss with assessor's office their definitions), frequency of recommended update to Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) (every five years), section on management strategies for town-owned land (McClave to revise), section on aggressively using tools for preserving open space (Michaud to revise). Members agreed that we would like to send the page about the Farmington River to Eileen Fielding, FRWA, and Liz Lacy, FRCC, to get their input on possible changes. Cronauer will do this.

IV. Open Space Plan Update

Cronauer asked Darlington if she would be willing to review and update the Open Space Plan. Darlington agreed. McClave will send Plan to all OSPC members for their review so they can send comments to Darlington for her consideration for the update.

V. New Hartford Land Trust Report

McClave said that NHLT is hosting a snowshoe/wildlife trek this weekend at the Alfred Sabolcik and encouraged OSPC members to join. It will be led by a CCSU Master's student who is doing wildlife research there. The NHLT's goal is to open the property for hiking by late June. This will take a lot of effort and she exhorted members to let NHLT know if they can help or know others who may be interested. NHLT is entering into a new contract with NRCS for a forest management plan on that entire property. After completed, NHLT will likely engage in conservation practices on the land with NRCS future support over about ten years. McClave distributed flyers about the NHLT Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 15th at 4:00 p.m. at Town Hall. One of CT's leading experts on bees will give a presentation after the NHLT reports. She said the state land conservation conference is on Saturday, March 21st, at Wesleyan.

VI. Stewardship Report – No discussion.

VII. Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate – No discussion.

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the OSPC is set for March 23rd.

Motion to adjourn at 9:04 p.m. (McClave/Griswold-Nelson) was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Madeline McClave, Secretary
New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission