

Open Space Preservation Commission
Town of New Hartford, CT, Town Hall
Monday, October 23, 2023

Members present: Doug Roth (Chairperson), Eva Barham, Karen Griswold-Nelson, Madeline McClave (attending by phone), Rusty Warner, Mary Hoag (alternate). Absent: Bill Michaud, Jean Darlington (Secretary).

Doug Roth called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm, seating Mary as a member. Approval of previous meeting minutes were postponed in order to have a quorum of attendees from 9/25 meeting that Mary did not attend.

Update on PA 490- Doug to reach out to Tax Assessor to confirm that the statute-specified penalty exception to PA 490 applies in any case title is transferred to a qualified nonprofit land conservation organization that is legally preserved in perpetuity. He will report back.

Upon the arrival of 2 members, Eva moved to accept the minutes from 9/25 into record. Karen seconded. Vote was 5 to 0 to do so, with one abstention (Mary, who was not at 9/25 meeting.)

Updates on current open space preserves and trails:

Jones Mtn – Eva reported a lot of trail erosion after heavy rains. They were able to clear one culvert and create a temporary water bar in another area. Discussed making official water bars possibly for Thursday work party this week. Requesting Bill to draft carriage road maintenance plan, targeting potential efforts to address culvert clearing, rut filling, as well as water bar construction, with a short-term focus on possible November 25th work party logistics and activities. Rusty to collaborate with Bill, as well as Eva and Madeline.

Goula and Phillips Farm- Madeline will email management plan for Goula property that OSPC has edited and approved. Doug to draft a management plan for Phillips after talking with the Phillips' about mowing of paths. He will send replacement signage for the kiosk. Eva and Jean will put up trail arrows soon.

Butler- Management plan has been signed by NHLT as required. Madeline will send to Dan Jerram and Doug. Discussed holes on trails- possible muskrat activity. Eva will fill with river stones tomorrow and report back.

Stewardship- Madeline to check with town about advertising to recruit volunteers for fall clean up at Jones Mountain and other ongoing trail work. Eva noted FB site New Hartford Chatter as possibly adding visibility for OSPC. Suggestion for possible QR code on kiosks which would refer potential volunteers back to NHLT website.

Land Preservation Fund- Doug researching and will report back. He spoke with Gordon Ross who stated OSPC has annual budget of \$500. Discussion about amount the Fund owes on the Butler preservation project.

New Business- In his role as agricultural contact person for OSPC, Rusty plans to get a list of farms in town with PA 490 agricultural designation, and find out about their needs and if they are interested in access to grants, loans, etc. Madeline said that CT Farmland Trust, CT Farm Bureau, and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are also good resources for farms. Going forward, we need to add to monthly agenda item 'agricultural review' for Rusty's report and group discussion of agricultural issues.

Eva moved, with Karen seconding, to adjourn meeting. Meeting was adjourned at 8 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Hoag (Secretary Pro Tem)
OSPC Alternate