

Town of New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission
Special Meeting Minutes – February 11, 2015

Members Present: Jean Cronauer, Jean Darlington, Madeline McClave, Bill Michaud, Caren Ross.
Guest: Rusty (Seth) Warner.

Chair Jean Cronauer called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m. after the First Selectman stopped by.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Bill Michaud moved, Caren Ross seconded, and all except Jean Darlington voted to approve the December 15, 2014, minutes. Darlington abstained as she was not a member or present at the December meeting.

II. Welcome New Member

Chair Jean Cronauer and all members welcomed Jean Darlington as a new member of the OSPC.

III. Lots of Record

Members reviewed and discussed the draft of the Lots of Record policy. Cronauer will follow up with Beth Paul, Town Assessor, about this again. Michaud will work on scenarios using different numbers for the percentage of land preserved and minimum lot size where this policy would be applicable. McClave will try to find out how other towns handle this. Members agreed to focus on this and the tax abatement policy at the next meeting on February 23rd.

McClave reported on her recent conversation with Jeanne Jones about their family's situation vis a vis this issue. Members agreed this was a good example of the disincentive that exists for landowners to preserve their large parcels if they want to keep a small parcel of land that does not have a building on it, is not slated for building and does not meet the minimum acreage for eligibility for PA 490 program. Members also discussed coming up with other scenarios and reiterated that this policy is being advanced on principle.

IV. Updates for 2015 POCAD

Members discussed overall reactions to and specific language of the draft of the conservation section of the Plan of Conservation and Development received from Town Hall. All felt that, in addition to specific inaccuracies and substantive items of concern, the tone and format are not appropriate. It was agreed that it does not read as a serious planning document but more as a promotional piece. Some questions were directed to P&Z alternate member, Bob Moore, who happened to be present as an observer to this meeting. The main one was: Why are we not updating the 2005 POCAD as was stated to us and other commissions several times at the beginning of this process? Moore said he would look into it. The group agreed again that the 2005 Plan was very well done and that we should use it as a starting point for revisions this time as P&Z and the Land Use staff had stated several months ago. Cronauer will talk to Steve Sadlowski about this and tell him that OSPC wishes to write our own section of the Plan from the 2005 version. McClave stated that there are errors of fact in the draft regarding the New Hartford Land Trust and permanent preservation of land that she will talk with Steve about. She is also pursuing changes to the open space map draft.

Michaud said that he will work on the policy initiatives segment of the open space/conservation section of the Plan. Cronauer, Darlington and McClave will all work to revise sections. Michaud will send entire text file without the photos and charts.

V. Open Space Plan Update

No discussion.

VI. Town Center Overlay Zone/Hurley Property Plan

Cronauer reported on a Hurley property development meeting convened by the Town Land Use office. She said she suggested the possibility of an easement for a buffer area along the river.

VII. New Hartford Land Trust Report

McClave said that NHLT will receive about 70 acres through an estate by the end of the year. The NHLT Annual Meeting will be Sunday, March 15th at 4:00 p.m. at Town Hall.

VIII. Stewardship Report – No discussion.

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

X. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the OSPC is set for February 23.

Motion to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. (Cronauer/Ross) was approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Madeline McClave, Secretary
New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission