

North Salem Open Space Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Monday June 2, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7: p.m. in Delancy Hall in North Salem. Those present were Amy Rosemarin, Cynthia Curtis, Graham Trelstad, AKRF, Gloria Stein, Martin Aronchick, John Roach, Barbara Jacobi, Lynn DeGregorio, Pat Carey and Bill Butler.

Item 1: Welcomes/Recap: Amy opened the meeting with introductions and led an initial discussion and recap of our previous meeting including an overview of the committee's objective to split the Town into 4 quadrants for property viewing purposes.

With respect to viewing Town parcels Cynthia indicated a means of cross referencing would be to have a scenic overlay of different layers of assorted Town maps such as the CAC maps to better identify sensitive/vulnerable/desirable parcels on which to focus. Further, the goal would not necessarily be to recommend parcels to buy but provide input/inspection data for the Town Board for reference when parcels are presented for development or an alternate use. She also welcomed John Roach aboard anticipating the benefit to the OSC from his focus/opinions on wetland issues.

Item 2: Quadrant Reviews: Committee commenced to review the inspections by different team members of the 4 geographically delineated quadrants of Town. Pat Carey provided a booklet of pictures taken within her assigned Northeast Quadrant including notable parcels bounded by Baxter Rd, June Rd, Titicus Rd and up to Old Salem Farm. Pictures were accompanied by a description of the walk and terrain noting the difficulty of accuracy due to the heavy seasonal foliage. A general discussion ensued regarding the difficulty of being able to pinpoint exactly where photos and property boundaries were located as well as the objective of identifying key parcel qualities particularly those with elevation perspectives that should, by consensus, be preserved. Amy followed with photos of the Northwest Quadrant of Town with similar feedback on property quality and the challenge of accurate identification.

Quadrant reviews led to a discussion of individual parcels considered desirable/sensitive including the Colley, Speyer and Carmichael properties as well as the track just east of Joe Bohrdrum Park leading to the orchards on Hardscrabble Road. Other desirable, and particularly vulnerable, identified parcels include the recently purchased Marvin Schwartz parcel (formerly Marx property approx 1800 acres) known to have abundant wildlife. This parcel, along with the Orchard assemblage along Hardscrabble Road, are subject to hatch area studies next spring by Dr. Mike Clemens of the Westchester Conservation Society. Cynthia noted that Mike had recently done a similar hatchery study in Bedford and indicated the next step is to obtain permission of the private landowners and ATT for walkthrough inspections.

Item 3: Inter-Committee Liaisons: In order to best coordinate OSC mapping efforts individual members volunteered to be liaisons with other Town committees including Martin – Landmarks Committee and Bill - backup to Pat Carey with the Recreation Committee. OSC will also liaison with the Historical Society to overlay their complimentary work.

Item 4: General Comments: Discussions followed on general open space issues and activities including the conservation easement along the Titicus River by the Hearst property with the assistance of the Open Land Trust. Other high profile parcels discussed included the Verni conference development site on the north side of Hardscrabble Rd, the Stanton fields, the North Salem Winery and Duncan Daton piece. There was an apparent wetland infringement on the S Ratner home development site which caused work to be halted for the time being by the State. Cynthia indicated there has been talk within the CAC to coordinate with NYS on establishing similar wetlands protection standards for the County and Town since NYS standards are more restrictive than local standards with respect to wetland issues. She also noted the town has a metes and bounds identification map noting 12 conservation easements in North Salem which our consultants will scan to identify overlapping linkages. Once the feedback is overlaid on the map the OSC can continue the effort of prioritizing parcels. Martin initiated a discussion on how the OSC can best qualify different property conditions such as steep slopes, aesthetic appeal and other conditions that may determine preference/priority of preservation. Cynthia brought up the feasibility of performance based zoning, or not, but by way of discussion example only referred to the extra 40 acres at the Salem Nursing Home site that could conceivably be an interactive development coordinated with the input of the recreational committee..

At meeting end, it was acknowledged that the outright purchase of land is very expensive and the efforts of the OSC should focus on contributing as much quality viewshed data to the decision making counsels of Town (Board & Planning Committee) so they can guide/structure future development in a way that best suits the Town of North Salem. Amy and Cynthia encouraged all OSC members to attend and contribute to Town/Planning Board hearings as often as possible.

Next Meeting: Follow-Up Actions: By the next meeting the balance of the Southside of Town should be viewed and photographed by Lynn, Barbara and Bill as Elaine is not currently available for property visits. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday June 16, at 7 PM.

Submitted by:

Date: June 16, 2008

Bill Butler, OSC Member