



# SARATOGA SPRINGS

## OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MINUTES

AUGUST 24, 2022

5:00 P.M.

CITY HALL, 474 BROADWAY (Zoom)

- **WELCOME AND ATTENDANCE**
  - a. City Staff: Tina Carton; Admin of Parks, Open Lands, Historic Preservation and Sustainability
  - b. Committee members: Tom Denny, Dave Miller, Steve Samuell, Jenn Hunt Dempsey, Ed Lindner, Anita Morzillo, and Jeff Cheek.
  - c. OSAC Member Changes – Steve Samuell reappointed to full term. Jeff Cheek welcomed as new member to OSAC. Jeff provided a summary of his background and interest for being on the committee.
  - d. Public: There were no members of the public present.
- **PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comment.
- **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUND – UPDATE (REPORT ON MEETING WITH COMMISSIONER GOLUB). CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE FORMAL RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL. NEXT STEPS.**
  - a. Meeting with Commissioner Golub was postponed.
  - b. Ed Lindner provided an overview of some changes he made to the Community Preservation Fund document, including but not limited to: Limits on what the fund can be used for + real estate transfer tax; expand permissible purposes to include existing open space; remove preserving agricultural lands; and remove transfer of development rights. In its current form, it is a concept document to be utilized to start discussions with the council.
  - c. Ed Lindner summarized the process for implementing a Community Preservation Fund as follows: 1) State legislature to pass state law allowing the City of Saratoga Springs to move forward in establishing a fund, 2) City passes local ordinance/legislation, and 3) City passes tax law (subject to public referendum).
- **DISCUSSION: NEW DPW PRIORITIES FOR INCREASING OPEN SPACE AND GREEN SPACE IN THE CITY.**
  - a. Without Commissioner Golub in attendance, this item was tabled.
- **DISCUSSION: POTENTIAL CHANGES TO OSAC MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES - CONSERVATION EASEMENT AND/OR NO-CUT ZONE MONITORING**
  - a. After much discussion, it was generally agreed upon that monitoring conservation easements was out of OSAC's scope. Key points made include the following: there is no mechanism for monitoring, reporting and enforcement in place; easements are not fully known or documented, may be viewed as conflict of interest



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for OSAC; and it is simply too complicated. Tina mentioned that she monitors Pitney Meadows on a yearly basis on behalf of the city.

- **OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE**
  - a. Draft of the open space plan due around early September. Committee review +/- 2 months. Send to Council in December.
  - b. It was decided to engage the Council on the Community Preservation Fund following completion of the Open Space Plan.
  - c. Committee had several comments on the draft map. It was decided that Anita and Jen would collaborate to set up an on-line google folder and “jam” for OSAC to share comments on the map and matrix. Send comments directly to Tina Carton if unable to access and utilize the on-line setup. Post or send comments by 9/16.
- **OPEN SPACE PLAN: STRATEGIES FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**
  - a. Chairman Tom Denny noted that private citizens were the drivers in pushing forward previous open space plans.
  - b. It was discussed and generally agreed upon that additional stakeholders should be engaged shortly before rolling out the plan to the public. Steering Committee representative should be reengaged soon.
  - c. It was again noted that the Community Preservation Fund (tax) component of the plan will likely be of great concern to some of the public so should be handled appropriately. It was mentioned that it will only be a recommendation along with other potential funding strategies, and again reinforcing that engaging council and other specifically on this topic will follow completion of plan.
- **EXECUTIVE SESSION: WHEREAS THE PROPOSED ACQUISITION, SALE OR LEASE OF REAL PROPERTY OR THE PROPOSED ACQUISITION OF SECURITIES, OR SALE OR EXCHANGE OF SECURITIES HELD BY SUCH PUBLIC BODY, BUT ONLY WHEN PUBLICITY WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY AFFECT THE VALUE THEREOF.** Committee conducted an Executive Session.
- **PUBLIC COMMENT:** No public comment.
- **MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.**