

SOMERS OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE
335 Route 202
Somers, NY 10589

MEETING MINUTES

June 15, 2011

Chair Michael Barnhart called the meeting to order. The following members were in attendance: Jan Antonucci, Michael Barnhart, Jeanette Gerfin, Laretta Jones and Gail Simpson. David Gotz and Rosey VanWart of Somers Land Trust also attended.

Conservation Board member Shoshana Hantman was also present as a guest.

CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS

Conservation Board member Shoshana Hantman is interested in learning how to identify and designate Critical Environmental Areas in an effort to better assist the Conservation Board. To date there is only one Critical Environmental Area in Somers and its location is in Baldwin Place. Biodiversity Mapping of the upland and wetland habitats is one tool that can be used in determining these Areas. The function of the Biodiversity Mapping subcommittee of the Open Space Committee was explained. Detailed findings at the completion of the process will be invaluable to both the Conservation and Planning Boards, as it will not only assist them in making decisions, but justify them as well. Mrs. Hantman was invited to join the group at their next Biodiversity Mapping meeting in July.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mrs. Antonucci to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2011 meeting as submitted. Mrs. Simpson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

REPORTS & DISCUSSION

Chair's Report

ANGLE FLY PRESERVE & SOMERS LAND TRUST UPDATES

Work Days – Most of the White Trail was cut at the last work day on May 22. Bridging and planking will be done at the June 18 work day. Trail maintenance is needed on the trails completed to date. Ideally it would be nice to get local groups to assist in this effort. In the meantime, trail maintenance will be done as part of the work days.

Vandalism – Earlier today, Mr. Barnhart and Ms. Jones met with Supervisor Mary Beth Murphy, Police Lieutenant Bob Stanton, Parks and Recreation

Superintendent Steve Ralston, Parks and Recreation Board Chair Jim Papa, and Open Space Institute Stewardship Coordinator Paul Elconin to discuss the vandalism problem at Angle Fly. All agreed it is an issue and steps need to be taken to remedy it. It is the wish of the Supervisor to renovate the Reynolds House to be used as a caretaker's residence with Recreation Fees. Another meeting will take place to discuss this idea further and to determine the expendable money amount. Bids are being solicited for boarding up the condos and Tatham Mansion, as well as filling the hole where the pool house was. A suggestion was made that whoever submits a bid to fill where the pool house was, also be asked if they are able to donate their services to dredge the pond. The Highway Department will be asked for assistance with repairing and reinstalling the snowfencing around the Tatham Mansion and condos. A heavier chain will be placed across the roadway leading to the Mansion and the Police will increase patrols at the Preserve, start driving up as far as the Mansion and patrol on foot. Mrs. Simpson will research camera traps. All agreed to pass a motion via email to purchase them and get them installed as quickly as possible. Information will be added to the website about the vandalism and a blurb will be put in the newsletter. The Somers Record will be asked to do a newspaper article. A request will be made to Mr. Ralston to purchase and install under surveillance signs at his earliest convenience.

Amendment of Conservation Easement – A request has been made to amend the conservation easement to swap a piece of property, designated for active recreation, from behind the Somers Manor Nursing Home with the lot behind the tennis courts at Reis Park. If ball fields were ever to be built, it would make more sense to build them on property adjacent to Reis Park. Mr. Elconin felt that it would be very simple to do the amendment. The next step is to have an appraisal done to determine that in doing so, the value of the property would not diminish. Supervisor Murphy will be contacting the firm that did the original appraisal.

Hunting – Turkey season is over and no hunters hunted turkey. The County is in the process of centralizing a Deer Management program under the direction of Dan Aitchison. Both Mr. Barnhart and Mr. MacGregor will be attending those meetings.

ELLA Stream Project – A public presentation about the ELLA Stream Project still has to be done. Mr. Barnhart will circulate an email with some date options.

DEP Permit – There have been some difficulties with getting the information off the GPS and onto the maps. The Town Planner is working on the situation. Mrs. Schirmer will follow up as to the status.

Gold Award Project - Girl Scout Emily Enoch presented an update on her Gold Award project proposal. She is creating a brochure and interpretive signs for the Yellow Trail at Angle Fly Preserve. Text and pictures of the signs were

presented for Board review and comment. There will be an introductory sign and one on each of the following topics: invasive vines and barberry bushes; New York fern; tree galls; and woodpeckers and red tailed hawks. The brochure will expand on the information on the signs.

Somers Democratic Club – The Somers Land Trust and the Friends of Angle Fly Preserve are one of the recipients of the Somers Democratic Club's 2011 Community Appreciation Award. Mr. Barnhart, Mr. MacGregor and Mrs. Simpson will be attending the dinner on June 28.

BIODIVERSITY MAPPING

Hudsonia's Gretchen Stevens has emailed her availability to Mr. Barnhart to conduct a field verification training workshop. The email will be circulated and a date chosen. Mrs. Hantman will be invited to attend as well. The next Biodiversity Mapping meeting will take place on July 14 at 6:30 p.m. at Mrs. Antonucci's house.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 21 at 7:30 p.m. in the Map Room at the Town House.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Somers Open Space Committee

cc: Open Space Committee
Town Board
Town Clerk
Town Planner
Conservation Board
Parks and Recreation Board
Planning Board