

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

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Town of Somers
WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y.

SOMERS TOWN HOUSE
335 ROUTE 202
SOMERS, NY 10589

MICHAEL BARNHART
CHAIRMAN



MEETING MINUTES

June 21, 2012

Chairman Michael Barnhart called the meeting to order. The following members were in attendance: Michael Barnhart, Jeanette Gerfin, Laretta Jones, Bob MacGregor, and Rosey VanWart.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. MacGregor to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2012 meeting as submitted. Mrs. VanWart seconded the motion. All were in favor.

REPORTS & DISCUSSION

Chair's Report

ANGLE FLY PRESERVE AND SOMERS LAND TRUST UPDATES:

The white trail has been opened up again.

Trail maintenance will be the focus of the workdays until the bridge can be built on the DEP portion of the property.

All that is left to do in order to close out the Recreational Trails Grant is to sign off on the worksheets, which Mr. MacGregor can do, and Mr. Barnhart has to sign off on his.

A new Trees for Tribs application has been completed.

Scout Projects:

Memory trees will be planted on the east side of Reynolds Run. Brendan Murphy has

given Mr. MacGregor a list of trees and suppliers.

The rain garden and slope protection projects have been completed.

A bridge will be built over the drainage ditch on the blue trail by Route 35.

Bog planking and natural seating will be done by the beaver pond.

A baseline for the deer enclosure has been created by Ms. Jones. It will be used to explore and do further research on July 6 at 10:00 a.m.

Fundraising – A Fall Trail/Scavenger Hunt fundraising event will be held on October 20. Mrs. Schirmer and Mrs. Simpson have been exchanging ideas.

Independence Day Celebration – All is in order for an information table at the Independence Day Celebration on June 30 in Reis Park. The goals are to promote membership; to solicit help with the pond restoration, Reynolds House rebuild and condo repurposing; and Angle Fly Preserve awareness.

Con-Tech Construction Technology, Inc. – A plaque still has to be made to thank Con-Tech Construction Technology, Inc. for the bluestone patio and fieldstone wall and stairs that they built by the chicken coop in Angle Fly. Ms. Jones will create the artwork and proof it, and Mrs. Schirmer will work with Mr. Ralston on ordering it.

Dedications – On September 15 at 10:00 a.m., a dedication ceremony will take place at Angle Fly to dedicate the Reynolds House/Pond area to Mickey Oliver; yellow trail to Peter Burckmyer and foot bridge to John Behler.

Heritage Hills Reporter – Ms. Jones met with Leslie Douwes, a writer for the Heritage Hills Reporter. She will write monthly about the Somers Land Trust and Angle Fly Preserve. The first article will appear in the September issue.

Collaborative Grant – The Somers Land Trust has an opportunity to be part of a collaborative grant with the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Hudson Highlands Nature Center, Teatown Lake Reservation, and Taconic Outdoor Education Center to create an educational “kit” to be used by visitors. Mrs. Antonucci, Mrs. Schirmer and Mrs. Simpson will represent the Land Trust. The grant will be due toward the end of the summer.

Somers Sustainability Action Plan – Mr. MacGregor met with Somers Energy Environment Committee Chair Herb Oringel and members Mike Blum and Frank Maricic so they could present the first draft of the Somers Sustainability Action Plan. It is a 5 year plan that should ultimately be an addendum to the Town Master Plan. Included are three initial projects, spread over two phases, with goals for each. Mr. MacGregor explained what has been done at Angle Fly Preserve, as well as plans for the Reynolds House and proposals for the condos. They were quite impressed and would like to

incorporate some of what was discussed into the Plan. Another meeting will be held.

PROPERTIES OF CONCERN:

There are several properties of concern and include the 5 acre DiNardo/Abbate farm; the 26 acre lot that is on the market and abuts the Towne Centre at Somers; and some properties that adjoin Angle Fly.

The Committee discussed the need for dedicated funding for preserving significant open space. Monies from the 2000 bond initiative were used up on the purchase of Angle Fly, and polling associated with the Master Plan has indicated ongoing public support for land conservation. In an economic downturn, there are often opportunities to protect land, and there are still a number of important properties that deserve protection and could provide substantial public benefit. For example, easily accessible farmland such as the DiNardo/Abbate farm could be used for community garden plots and a farmers market. Mr. Barnhart will speak to Supervisor Murphy about the feasibility of doing a Town survey to see what the community would support during these tough economic times.

At the next meeting, copies of lists of properties of concern that were created some years ago will be provided to each member of the Open Space Committee. Mrs. Schirmer will pull the memo sent to the Town Board a couple of years ago listing the top ten important properties. In July, arrangements will be made to meet with the Town Assessor and Planner to discuss the Committee's concerns about these properties as well.

OLD BUSINESS

Biodiversity Mapping – Arrangements have been made to access the IBM property to do ground verification. This must be completed by July 31. Arrangements will be made for a convenient day and time for the Committee to do this. Mr. Barnhart will make copies of the worksheets, fact sheets and forms. Clipboards will be needed as well. A contact has finally been made with the folks at Stonewall Farms and Mr. Barnhart will follow up.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 19 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
Parks and Recreation Board
Planning Board