

**MINUTES, Gardiner Open Space Commission Meeting, via Zoom.**

**Monday March 8, 2021, 7:00 - 8:30 PM.**

**Present:** Jean McGrane (Chair,) Kellie George, Kay Hoiby, Linda Geary, Laura Wong-Pan, Laura Rose, Rebecca Benner.

Minutes taken by: Laura Rose.

**Quotes: (Kellie)**

Land really is the best art. - Andy Warhol

In nature, nothing is perfect and everything is perfect. Trees can be contorted, bent in weird ways, and they're still beautiful. - Alice Walker

Forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair. - Khalil Gibran

Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything. -Albert Einstein

**Opening Business.**

Approval of February minutes: Motion made by Kay, Kellie seconded, all approved.

No changes to agenda.

Next regular meeting planned for Monday April 12 2021, 5 - 6:30 PM.

Laura WP to send out Zoom invite, Linda G to provide us with quotes.

**New Members:**

The Town hasn't received any applications to replace Becca. Their website states that the application period closed on February 28th, and we are past this date.

*Jean to check in about removing or extending this deadline.*

Jean asked Kellie for contact info for her friend who may be interested.

She asked all of us to consider who else we may ask to join.

**Moving ahead with a Conservation Easement and Land Acquisition Program for Gardiner:**

Discussed meeting with Town Board, scheduled for tomorrow (March 9th.)

Our hope is that they will adopt and support our plan for this program.

*Laura R to contact Franco Carucci to be sure we can share our screens, if desired.*

Question posed: Would we like to have a specific Town Board liaison?

**Acquisition and scoring component:**

Group reviewed and commented on the presentations Laura WP and Laura R have been preparing for Town Board meeting.

**Educational component:**

Kay prepared a draft list of education sessions, as discussed at our last (and other) meetings. Group discussed the draft. We all had more to say on this subject than expected.

Since we are preparing for our first public outreach to the Town about this program, Jean suggested we start by introducing our group, including having each member speak briefly about our backgrounds and why we joined.

We discussed then sharing GOSC's goals rather than launching immediately into the topics we had previously considered for this session, or bringing in a speaker.

We agreed we wanted to dive deeper into this topic than tonight's agenda will allow time for. *The full group will discuss this further at our next meeting, and a subcommittee will be formed if appropriate.*

Advertising and public relations were discussed.

Kay suggested we get the first session advertised in the *May Gardiner Gazette*.

Speakers were discussed. Kay has already secured Nate Nardi-Cyrus to speak. Scenic Hudson was suggested as worth approaching due to their extensive knowledge in the area of agricultural preservation. Dennis Doyle was suggested for his expertise in Ulster County funding options.

*Kay to seek and contact possible speakers.*

**Legal Component:**

Jean wanted to be sure that planning for tomorrow's Town Board presentation included clear citing of Linda Geary's concerns over how the scoring criteria will be adopted, so the Town Board will consider these concerns. Inclusion of this topic was discussed.

**Proposed changes to the Environmental Conservation Commission.**

The ECC requested Linda and Jean be included in their upcoming meeting with the Town Board on March 24th. Linda's memo to Laura Walls about the overlapping of roles of the ECC and GOSC will be discussed.

We discussed again where we might want to land, in terms of our group's role in the processing and acquisition of conservation easements related to subdivisions. The environmental protection part of this work is currently in the hands of the ECC.

While having an advisory role in the structuring and development of these easements is something Jean would like our group to maintain as an option, we agree as a group that we don't want to supplant the ECC's role. Theirs is a major job, that is so important.

And it's in keeping with their mission.

*Linda and Jean to attend March 24 7PM Town Board meeting; other members of our group are encouraged to attend.*

**Monitoring the Town's Properties (given for conservation) and Conservation Easements:**

The Town agreed in 2019 to establish a monitoring program. To date, there has been very little movement in getting this off the ground. We are concerned. It is important.

*Group to discuss further.*

**Heartwood Conservation Easement Baseline Report:**

Marybeth gave Laura Wong-Pan a copy of this report. We discussed where best to house it. Laura has room in her office, and we decided that is a good safe spot.

Jean suggested that it should also be saved electronically.

**Expiration of Becca's Term:**

This is Becca's last night with our group. We wanted to acknowledge her contribution.

We've made a donation to the Walkill Valley Land Trust in her name.

We thanked her and also discussed her feedback on being part of the group for three years.

**Meeting adjourned** at 8:30 PM.

**Next Meeting:** Monday April 12, 2021 at 5 PM. **Quotes:** Linda.