

Minutes, Gardiner Open Space Commission Meeting

May 8, 2023 at 6-7:30 PM

Hybrid Meeting/ Town Hall and on Zoom

Attendance:

Present: Jean-Ann McGrane, Kay Hoiby, Linda Geary, Laura Rose, Laura Wong Pan. Zoom: Tara Hoey, Kellie George.

Regular Business:

Approval of April Minutes: Kay made a motion to approve, seconded by Tara, unanimous approval, no objections.

Next meeting scheduled for: June 12, 2023, 6-7:30 PM

Updates:

- Tree Cutting Violation on the Rail Trail:

Town of Gardiner will support and give the reins to WVLT as they actively pursue restitution by the person who cut the trees. Fines and replanting are some of what's expected.

- Status of 2007 Open Space Bond:

Linda identified a bond attorney to review current status. Recommendation has been made to the Town.

- Agricultural Land preservation:

Winkler Farms: Jean and Christie De Boer of WVLT met with Ginny Winker to discuss creating a conservation easement on her property. Jean felt the meeting was successful and it will be followed up with additional discussion.

- Outreach to Top Scoring Farms: Tara started to write a script for outreach, per our discussion at the last meeting. Jean and Laura R to meet to further discuss how we will pursue this goal, and will create a plan to present to the group.

- Millbrook Subdivision:

Most of us attended the recent Planning Board meeting (either in person or via Zoom) in which this project was discussed. The PB's discussion included some positive consideration of the developer's request to have a deed restriction put into place instead of a conservation easement. This doesn't track with the town's Open Space Plan or that other Gardiner subdivisions have required the inclusion of conservation easements.

Jean feels that we are in a unique position as a group to educate both the developer and the Planning Board about the value of conservation easements in long term development, and said that we need to speak up about this project, not just for this project, but to set precedent for future development. Millbrook's largest parcel scored in the top 3% of the Community Preservation Plan scores, and as such, proper preservation is especially important.

-Follow up on Monitoring Violations:

Some of the violators have been called by the Town Supervisor but we are waiting on more information about the outcome of the Town's follow up.

All other agenda items held to next meeting.