

LAND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

March 20, 2006 – 2:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Peck; Supervisors A. Johnson, Sausville, Yepsen, Thompson; Tom Lewis, Lynn Schumann, David Miller; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Jaime O'Neill, Planning; John Behan, Melissa Barry, Behan Planning Assoc.; Susan Sutch, Town of Galway; Robert Bryant, Saratoga Co. Snowmobile Club Assoc.; Stan Weeks, Town of Greenfield; Audrey Ball, Town of Malta; Alane Chinian, Saratoga P.L.A.N.; Pieter Litchfield, Wilton Open Space; Sarah Clarkin, Gabriel Cahalam; Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park; Steve Williams, Daily Gazette

Chairman Peck called the meeting to order.

Chairman Peck said he talked to John Behan's office about their second round of public meetings. He stated this Committee will be meeting again on April 10th and May 8th. Mr. Behan said they will need time to meet again with this Committee before they go to the public for major recommendations. He said they have a draft outline for the Committee to look at, and they have a draft vision map. We want to talk about potential dates for workshops, he said. Our scope called for us to have a general County meeting. We want to have a series of four more meetings around the County, he stated. Chairman Peck said that is an outstanding idea, and he asked when the dates for these meetings would be. Mr. Behan said May 18, May 24, June 1 and June 8 at locations to be announced. Mr. Behan said they would like to have meetings in the Day/Edinburg, Galway/Charlton areas and possibly Halfmoon. Mr. Miller said it is good to mix them up around the County. Chairman Peck stated Behan Assoc. will add these extra meetings to the scope without additional charge. He commended Mr. Behan for that. Mr. Sausville asked why these public meetings are so far off. Mr. Behan stated they need to synthesize the recommendations coming out of this and work with the Committee to make sure they are on track. We would rather have your support and understanding, he added.

Ms. Barry reviewed the outline for the plan they will be writing - - Basic Introduction, Understanding What Green Infrastructure Is; Part 2, Outline and Overview of County Setting; Part 3, A synthesis of what we have done to date. We created individual maps and summary outlines of important goals and concepts of the area, she said. She stated they will be adding more detail and less detail; Part 4, trying to develop ways to prioritize. We will be getting back to you for more feedback, she said; Part 5, Recommendations for protecting and conserving green infrastructure, looking at County policy, planning and zoning efforts, and tools for conserving green infrastructure; Part 6, Funding sources for green infrastructure. We will be trying to figure out how much is available, she said; Part 7, Boiled down version of recommendations. She said the next chapter is on what are some ways you can use this plan. A local guide on how to use this plan. We will focus very highly on graphics in this plan, she said.

Ms. Barry said for the next meeting, we would like to have both the County vision map and individual source maps. She said she has received a lot of comments on the individual maps to date. We are trying to create one map to synthesize the four categories, she said.

Chairman Peck asked if anyone had any questions. He said he has been meeting with Melissa and John on a routine basis. It is important for everybody's ideas to keep funneling, he said.

Ms. Yepsen stated the Countywide plan meetings were very helpful in reaching various towns. She said it might be helpful to meet with the various planning boards as well. Our planning board is eager to meet to ask questions, she said. Chairman Peck said in the original meetings, we had each Supervisor designate people from their town to participate. There will be another opportunity coming up with the second round of meetings, he said. Mr. Lewis said he would hope all of the municipal planning boards would have interests before, during and after. It is my hope that each town buys into this overall County plan, he said. He stated each municipality is a home rule legislative body. Chairman Peck said if there are certain interests municipalities have, we will certainly meet with them. Mr. Behan said if you designate someone from your planning boards to get together to meet with us, they will be able to see how their municipality fits in.

Ms. Schumann asked if people using the plan will know what is currently existing in terms of trends vs. what is proposed. Ms. Barry stated the other four maps show what is existing and what is proposed. Ms. Schumann asked if towns can tell what is going on in their specific town or could there be a map for each town independently. Mr. Behan stated this is all in layers, so you can zoom in with the GIS. We have to think about the best way to put that out there, he said. We hope as a town looks at this plan, they would see how it plays out for them, he said.

Mr. Bryant said there are six snowmobile clubs that meet about every two months. Some of the trails that are showing on the map are not really there, and that needs to be fixed, he said.

Ms. Yepsen said their planning board offered to have a separate meeting to look at this. She said she would be there, but she would not be comfortable being alone having a dialog with them. Chairman Peck said that would be a good idea. As we go along, we can step back as well as move forward, he said. Ms. Yepsen mentioned they have so many issues, and she feels it is a process for them.

Ms. Chinian said Saratoga P.L.A.N. is helping to publicize this green infrastructure plan. Specific to Saratoga Springs, there will be a conservation workshop for the community, she said. We will be working with the Mayor, and the date is set for April 27th at the Saratoga Springs Public Library, she added. Mr. Lewis said the Saratoga Springs Planning Board could see what Saratoga P.L.A.N. has.

Mr. Miller suggested looking at what some of the strategic communication needs are and who you want the messenger to be. That way, you can set up a game plan and target around the County where you want to get the messages out, he said. Mr. Behan said they could have a package the Committee could take out and present. Mr. Miller suggested targeting the two County Chambers for a presentation at an appropriate time. Chairman Peck stated the key is review, ideas and keep pushing information to Behan.

Ms. O'Neill said April will be here soon, and that is usually when we release our grant application on line, place them in each Supervisor's mailbox, and they e-mail all of their contacts. She said she also included the 2005 package and a cover letter. She said she received a couple of inquiries of when this would be out. She said she has some potential applicants. I am confident we will have several more applicants than we've had in the past couple of years, she said. She said the time line is April 1 through June 30.

Ms. Schumann said for the map that goes out, is there a more clear copy than what is in the packet? Ms. O'Neill said it is a poor copy. It was taken from the Land Trust website. We can try to get our hands on a better map or maybe at this point, we do not need this map anymore, she said.

Chairman Peck stated all of the applications are brought by municipal applicants to the County. Individual landowners should confer with their town board and Supervisor because they will need a supporting resolution. Ms. Schumann stated not-for-profits can also make application with permission of their municipality. Ms. O'Neill said they can apply to the municipality where the land is located, and they can provide some in kind work.

Ms. Chinian asked what the amount available this year was. Mr. Hellwig stated \$300,000 for purchase and rights and \$195,000 for Behan. It is a good possibility there will be additional money available, he said. Chairman Peck said we will have to reappropriate monies from additional years. Ms. O'Neill stated they have six contracts signed, but they have not closed as yet. Mr. Hellwig said that Planning has to tell us that there is no possibility of these projects going forward. He said Mr. Benton indicated things they thought would pan out did not. By the next Committee meeting, we should have a better idea, he said.

Chairman Peck said Larry Benton, our Planning Director, will be retiring on April 20th. We want to wish him well. He has been a great asset to this County, he said. Ms. Schumann asked what is next? Chairman Peck said the Personnel Department is working on this.

Chairman Peck stated the updated grant applications will be out by April 1st. He urged everyone to keep pushing information to Melissa Barry and John Behan.

Ms. Schumann stated she is leaving her post with the Nature Conservancy and will be working as the Northeast Regional Director for Land Trust Alliance for the New York/New England area.

On a motion by Mr. Sausville, seconded by Mr. Johnson, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann.