

# LAND PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

**November 13, 2006 – 2:00 p.m.**

PRESENT: Chairman Peck; Supervisors Sausville, A. Johnson; Tom Lewis, Co. Planning Board; Lynn Schumann, Land Trust Alliance; Stan Weeks, Greenfield; Marsha Boelio, Galway Open Space Group; Susan Sutch, Galway Town Board; Alane Chinian, Saratoga P.L.A.N.; Jason Kemper, Jaime O'Neill, Planning; Heather Mallozzi, Audrey Ball, Town of Malta; Robert Bryant, Saratoga County Snowmobile Club Assn.; Steve Williams, Daily Gazette

Chairman Peck called the meeting to order.

Chairman Peck stated we have been working on the Green Infrastructure Plan to set the framework for the future of the County. We had a final public hearing in late September in Building #5 across the street, he said. From that, we had hand written comments that came in with additions or alterations to the Plan, he said. Copies of the proposed edits were distributed to the Committee. He said he concurs with these amendments to the Plan. He stated the Plan is to be adopted by this Committee and recommended to the Law & Finance Committee for their meeting on Wednesday, and then it will be voted on by the full Board next Tuesday. He said overall, it has been a great success traveling the County doing the public meetings. He said Mr. Kemper gave an overview at the Capital District Planners' Association. Mr. Kemper's role will be to continue to expand on this as he goes out to communities that are looking for assistance, he said.

Mrs. Schumann asked if a lot of changes to the draft were received. Chairman Peck said not a lot. These are changes that would be better suited for State grants, he said. We will need to continue to work on the funding of this. We want a positive document everyone can embrace, and then we will work on the funding, he said.

Mr. Weeks said he is concerned because the Petrified Sea Gardens is in a state of disrepair. Hopefully, there will be a better opportunity for funding by putting this in the Plan, he said.

**On a motion by Mr. Lewis, seconded by Mrs. Schumann, the Green Infrastructure Plan, as amended, was adopted unanimously.**

Mr. Lewis stated Saratoga County, relative to other counties in the region, has been an incredible economic engine, and this creates a reasonable and rational balance, he said. Chairman Peck said this is a great day for Saratoga County and for the children yet to come.

Mr. Lewis said assuming the Board adopts the Plan, how many copies will be printed. Mr. Kemper stated the contract with Behan was for 25. Ms. O'Neill stated it may be 30, and we may take care of other copies, she said. Mr. Kemper said a summary can be

printed. Chairman Peck said he would like to know how much per book it will cost from Behan. We will need a copy for every town and city and planning boards in the County, he said. Mr. Kemper said he can foresee a front and back color summary hitting on the key points. Mr. Sausville said we should not skimp in regard to the printing. Each of my town board will want a copy as well, he said. Mr. Kemper said we will get a digital copy of the whole thing. Chairman Peck said it will be up to the Board for another round of printing.

Chairman Peck said the Plan includes our recommendations for changes to our grant program. I am going to work on some type of an outline, he said. He stated in January, we should have something for everyone to look at. If anyone has changes, they can submit them to the Planning Department, he said. We can give everybody a copy of the current guidelines for the grant program and look at the ways they can be altered for a new grant application program that coincides with our other grant applications, he added. He said in January, there can be discussion and in February, we can adopt program alterations. Mr. Kemper asked if comments should be in before the first of the year. Chairman Peck said yes. Mr. Kemper stated we will send out a mailer to everybody on the Committee with the old requirements.

Mr. Sausville stated the Legislative & Research Committee is looking for proposals to further the advantage Saratoga County enjoys. He asked if there were any recommendations that could be submitted to them for a vision for our infrastructure. Mr. Johnson said typically, Legislative & Research puts together their agenda in March for our elected State representatives. We are looking to do this sooner than March, he said.

Mr. Sausville said there should be a mechanism for advocating the Plan. What happens to all ideas in the Plan, he asked. In Malta, I do not see any farms left, but I see a growing need for open space. How do we keep it, as we cannot afford to buy it all, he said. He said they do have hobby farms, and there should be a mechanism to begin to brainstorm ideas and move them through the process.

Chairman Peck said there will be a Saratoga P.L.A.N. informational meeting to learn about the new tax laws that provide property tax relief for land conservation on Thursday, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. at 112 Spring Street, Saratoga Springs. Copies of this announcement were distributed to the Committee.

Mrs. Schumann stated maybe there is a way for the State to support portions of the Plan. Mr. Sausville asked what will the agenda be to move this Plan forward. Chairman Peck said it will be important to run this through the Legislative & Research Committee. We can make it part of their agenda for the State to approve. Mrs. Schumann asked about the Community Preservation Act. Mr. Sausville said the beauty of that bill is it is up to each town to decide what they want to afford. It takes the pressure off the politician because it goes to a referendum, he said. He stated it is a great bill that is totally optional. Mrs. Schumann discussed using the transfer tax as a match at the County level. Chairman Peck said we can submit some of our ideas to the Legislative & Research Committee.

Chairman Peck thanked everybody for their hard work on the Green Infrastructure Plan. Mr. Sausville gave kudos to the Planning Department and the people of Saratoga P.L.A.N. Mr. Johnson commended Chairman Peck for his work with Behan Associates.

Chairman Peck said there will be no December meeting, but he still would like thoughts and ideas.

Ms. Mallozzi stated Malta has an RFP taking the Plan to the next level for the town. Ms. Ball said they are looking at catching the green up to the gray with open space protection. We have over 25 RFP's out, she said. Chairman Peck said that is an outstanding first step. He said he will be watching to see how this develops.

Mr. Bryant mentioned recreation easements for some of the IP land should be done by the first of the year.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Sodemann