

Trails & Open Space Transcript

12/1/2021

SPEAKERS

Phil Barrett, Benny Zlotnick, Kevin Tollisen, Several Supervisors, Jason Kemper

Kevin Tollisen

Welcome to the meeting of the Trails and Open Space Committee. Could I have a motion to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2021 meeting?

Phil Barrett

So moved.

Kevin Tollisen

Supervisor Barrett.

Benny Zlotnick

Second.

Kevin Tollisen

Supervisors Zlotnick. Thank you. Any further discussion? All in favor.

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Kevin Tollisen

Any opposed? Motion is carried. Next, we'll turn over to our Director to talk about the next items on the agenda.

Jason Kemper

Thank you, Chairman. The first item on the agenda for resolution is the community forest project that's located in the Town of Greenfield and the Town of Wilton, right on the town border. We've been to the committee several times on this over the past several months. Saratoga County received a grant from the US Forestry Service \$391,000. These funds will be passed through, in addition, our match will be up to \$120,000 in the open space reserve account. So we're here today, just to formalize a memorandum of agreement between the project partners, those project partners are Saratoga PLAN, the Open Space Institute, and Saratoga County. Saratoga County will retain ownership of the parcel afterwards, it's approximately 200 acres. And aside from the contributions in the county, you know, the cost sharing is a responsibility Saratoga PLAN and the Open Space Institute. This draft agreement,

which is attached to my memo, outlined what those responsibilities are at this point in time. We're just seeking authorization for the Chairman of the Board to sign this memorandum of agreement. I anticipate this project will close probably sometime mid 2022, at that point in time, we'll be back in front of the board to do the actual accepting the grant funds, passing those through and doing the budget amendment for the open space reserve account. There are some sections of the agreement that are blacked out, I have an unredacted version if anybody needs those, which just they're trying to figure out the final details between PLAN and OSI on what their contributions are for various components of the project. This has been reviewed in concept by the County Attorney's office and they provided their okay on it as well. That's it Chairman. Yeah, resolution.

Kevin Tollisen

Is there a resolution to accept this memorandum of agreement?

Phil Barrett

So moved.

Kevin Tollisen

Supervisor Barrett, is there a second?

Benny Zlotnick

Second.

Kevin Tollisen

Supervisor Zlotnick, thank you. Any further discussion? All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Kevin Tollisen

Any opposed? Motion was carried. Item four.

Jason Kemper

Item four is just a routine update on what we've got going on on the trails and the open space lands throughout the county. Number one, our fencing contractor has been selected for the fence repairs on the Zim Smith Trail over on Oak Street. If the weather holds out a little longer, they're going to try to get that work started in the next couple of weeks. The low bidder was Siena Fence out of Clifton Park for that project. Three bids were received. The Loudon Road parking lot repairs have been completed. I forwarded around some pictures of that, it came out very nice. DPW regraded the entire parking lot, fix some drainage issues, we redid some parts of the sign up there and they'll be back in the spring with some asphalt millings once the parking lot settles a little bit so that should solve most of our issues up at the Loudon Road parking lot. We have, four new signs have been ordered for this Zim Smith Trail. We've got Malta and Coons Crossing. Those are the nice new aluminum signs are lasting and much better. We put Plexiglas over them so any graffiti happens to him, we could just pull the Plexiglas off, replace the plexiglass and the signs are fine. Those are working out very well. And we also ordered

some new signs for the Edie Bullard trail. So we're slowly making our way around to all the county forest lands with new signage. The Champlain Canalway Empire State Trail construction in Waterford, you'll recall that Saratoga County was a project sponsor for this, funding was provided by the Hudson River Valley Greenway to us to do this project, it has reached substantial completion, the remaining punch list items will be completed. I just got an email before I came over here, I think that's done now, and the trail has been reopened to the public. There was a press release issued by Governor Hochul's office and New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. There's quotes in there from Saratoga County and I have attached a copy of the press release and the before and after pictures of the trail construction. It came out very well. Clearing and grubbing continues on the east mitigation site in the town of Northumberland. This will continue weather permitting. Once that stops and additional clearing and grubbing will be completed in the spring. This is a joint project with the Department of Public Works in regards to Karner Blue butterfly restoration efforts. The 2021 trails grants contracts were sent to all municipalities that received awards. Five contracts are executed this point in time Clifton Park, Malta, Greenfield has two and the Town of Charlton and one other has been sent to the County Attorney to be executed. We had, you'll see in the back of my packet, we had some damage done by a vehicle on the Zoom Smith Trail and the slopes along the Round Lake bypass. I want to thank DPW, they immediately assisted with their large picker truck and we got some large boulders, there was a small opening just to the right side of the fence. Someone went through there and you'll see in the back of the packet here we had a considerable amount of damage done to the slopes down there. So we'll have to reseed that in the spring but we've got new locks on the gate and boulders have been placed so this doesn't happen again.

Phil Barrett

Jason, that yeah, that's over that's over by the pedestrian bridge, right?

Jason Kemper

It's right below the pedestrian bridge.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, yeah. And that I've asked for that gate to be locked in the past because you can't see where cars come in there.

Jason Kemper

So, we replace that lock and what we've got numerous agencies that gain access there, Clifton Park Water Authority, the Sewer District because Sewer District goes down the hill to the pump station.

Phil Barrett

Yeah.

Jason Kemper

Water Authority has to go over to their over to their, their connection just over the pedestrian bridge. So I met with them out there. We've got all new locks keys. Everyone's gonna keep it locked. So hopefully it'll solve the problem because

Phil Barrett

You shouldn't need the boulders if you keep the doors locked.

Jason Kemper

They got around it.

Phil Barrett

They got around the

Jason Kemper

the fence. Yeah, if you look at the tracks, see the top picture there, they went right around the fence spun out and went up the hill. They didn't even go through the gate.

Phil Barrett

Well I don't know how they did that there's no gap in the fence there.

Jason Kemper

On the uphill side it was about 10-15 feet across there, that's where they snuck through. If you look at the top picture, see their tracks going up the slope.

Phil Barrett

Yeah.

Jason Kemper

And then once we placed the boulders now, we've got new locks on the gate so everything's buttoned up.

Phil Barrett

Alright, good. Yeah, I saw the I saw the fence was locked recently. Yeah, that was good.

Jason Kemper

Yep. And we've just, you know, I think it's an issue where, you know, we've got multiple agencies that need to gain access.

Phil Barrett

It's just people can't be lazy.

Jason Kemper

Yep.

Phil Barrett

Lock the damn gate. You know, we do it all the time.

Jason Kemper

We reiterated that point. I didn't use the word damn but I used everything else. So

Phil Barrett

Alright. I can use worse if you like.

Jason Kemper

No, I'm good.

Phil Barrett

Alright, I'll hold off.

Jason Kemper

Note taken. So anyways, it's fixed. You know, it's just, I want to thank DPW it's a constant issue. You know, it always amazes me what folks do when they think no one's watching. So we've currently got eight pending open space, Farmland Protection projects being administered by the Planning Department, three of those are getting close to close. And we've currently got 30 pending trail projects being administered by the Planning Department four of those projects have submitted final reimbursement requests and we're working with the auditors, making sure they've got everything to get their reimbursement. And that's all I have Chairman.

Kevin Tollisen

Questions. Any other business come before this committee? Motion to adjourn?

Phil Barrett

So moved.

Benny Zlotnick

Second.

Kevin Tollisen

Second, thank you. All in favor.

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Kevin Tollisen

Have a good afternoon everyone. Thank you.