

Trails & Open Space Committee Minutes
April 7, 2022 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Joe Grasso; Committee Members Eric Connolly, Kevin Tollisen and Matt Veitch; Supervisor Tara Gaston; Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, Matt Rose, Stephanie Hodgson, Christine Rush, County Administrator; Michael Hartnett, County Attorney; Jason Kemper, Jeff Williams, Planning; Barbara Conner, Malta Open Space.

Chairman Grasso called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Tollisen, seconded by Mr. Veitch, the minutes of the February 3, 2022 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Connolly, seconded by Mr. Tollisen, to authorize a logging revenue agreement with 3B Timber Company, Inc. for a timber harvest on a County owned parcel in the Town of Wilton and amending the 2022 Budget. Unanimous.

Mr. Kemper said that this went out as a revenue bid. There were 5 respondents. Timber prices are the highest he has ever seen at the County. The timber management company is paid 10% of the revenue received therefore the expense line will need to be adjusted. Mr. Veitch said that he would like to see some of the revenue be put towards trail maintenance.

Mr. Kemper gave an update on the Saratoga County Consolidated Agricultural Districts. Currently ongoing is an eight year review in one half of the County and an annual review in the other half of the County. A public hearing will be needed in June or July for the 8 year review. The Planning Department is working with the Real Property Tax Department and local assessors to ensure properties are coded correctly.

A motion was made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Connolly, to amend Resolution 258-2019 to reduce the total project cost to the Town of Northumberland for the preservation of the Bolesh Farm accredited by the Farmland/Open Space Preservation Grant Program. Unanimous.

Mr. Kemper said that there is a 10% cost differential in the Board's resolution that allows leeway between estimated and actual project cost, this project cost differential, estimated vs actual, is above 10%.

Mr. Kemper provided updates on County Forestland and Zim Smith Trail as follows:

- New garbage cans, etc. received and will be placed in the Floud Memorial Parking Lot
- New aluminum signs received for Kalabus Perry Parcel, will be replaced shortly
- The Champlain Canalway/Empire State Trail Construction in Waterford (Saratoga County is project sponsor) is closed out, final reimbursement from HRVG received.

- Final reimbursement received from Zim Smith Trail Southern Extension from NYSDOT (sent on 4-21-2021, received on 3-14-22)
- Zim Smith – Will need to place gate in spring at access road along the Fairway of Halfmoon, ongoing discussions with Saratoga County Sewer District on the re-lining project along portions of the trail. There are currently 8 pending Open Space/Farmland Protection Projects being administered by the Planning Department, 2 (Town of Northumberland/Bolesh and Town of Galway/Lendl Farm) submitted for reimbursement review.
- There are currently 21 (down from 24 at last update) pending Trail Projects being administered by the Planning Department, 3 closed since the last update (City of Saratoga Springs 2018 Project, Town of Charlton 2021 Project, Town of Clifton Park 2020 Project). Reimbursement is being reviewed for 3 projects ((Joint project with Stillwater, Mechanicville, Northumberland, Saratoga (2018), Town of Galway (2019 and 2020))

Mr. Kemper said that the applications for trails projects will go out in the next month or two. Mr. Kemper will present them to the committee for recommendations. The total project cost limit is currently \$100K for farmland and \$50K for open space. Mr. Kemper suggested that the Committee may want to consider changing the percentage or total project cost limit. Mr. Grasso requested that Mr. Kemper email information to the Committee to review for discussion at a future meeting.

A discussion took place regarding the Zim Smith Trail northern section. Mr. Kemper said that funding has been placed in the Capital budget for design. Mr. Veitch questioned if there were any thoughts about further extensions of the Zim Smith north of Saratoga Springs. Mr. Grasso said that he sees the need to take a fresh look at the existing County wide trail system. The plan should be updated to show what Towns are doing on their own so that potential interconnections or additional extensions can be discussed. Mr. Grasso would like the Planning Department to pull it all together, have each Town identify a point of contact that the Planning Department can work with and get input from.

Mr. Grasso said that Maria Trabka from Saratoga Plan is retiring, and Rob Davies is the new Executive Director. Mr. Grasso will be inviting Mr. Davies to present at an upcoming Committee meeting.

On a motion made by Mr. Connolly, seconded by Mr. Veitch, the meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Therese Connolly
Clerk of the Board