



Trails & Open Space Committee

Wednesday, August 2, 2023 4PM

40 McMaster Street, Ballston Spa, NY

Minutes

Present: Chairman Joe Grasso; Committee Members Eric Connolly, Ed Kinowski, Matthew Veitch.

Absent: Tara Gaston

Supervisor Phil Barrett; Steve Bulger, Ridge Harris, Stephanie Hodgson, Christine Rush, Anne Van Vorst, County Administrator; Michelle Granger, Michael Naughton, County Attorney; Jason Kemper, Jeff Williams, Planning; Robert Davies, Saratoga Plan.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Connolly, the minutes of the June 28, 2023 meeting were approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Veitch, to authorize the adoption of a Community Forest Management Plan in compliance with the United States Forestry Service Community Forest Grant Program. Unanimous.

Mr. Kemper gave an update on the items discussed at the last Trails & Open Space Committee and noted where those items are in the revised draft Community Forest Management Plan. This Management Plan is a requirement of the USFS grant received by the County, and must be approved before closing on the property. Mr. Kemper went over the proposed timeline and action items. After much discussion regarding the use of E-Bikes on the trails, it was determined that the plan would be adopted as presented. Saratoga Plan will be reporting back to the County on any conflicts that occur among various user groups.

A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mr. Veitch, to award 2023 Trails grants, and amending the 2023 County budget in relation thereto. Unanimous.

Total requests are \$120K for a total project cost of \$356,699.24 across 12 municipalities. Total grant allotment is \$100K. Trails reserve account funding is fully committed; however, the Open Space applications have come in under budget and additional funding can be transferred to the Trails account.

A motion was made by Mr. Connolly, seconded by Mr. Veitch, to authorize the necessary agreements to apply for, accept, and administer a New York State Snowmobile Grant-in-Aid Program Grant. Unanimous.

These are pass through funds that are received by the County and distributed to the Snowmobile clubs based upon their trail miles. Discussion ensued.

Discussion: Trails and Open Space Updates

Mr. Kemper provided the following update. Discussion ensued.

- Per a July 14, 2023 email, the Executive Director of Saratoga PLAN has requested the 2022 Town of Milton/Bombard Farm with an award of \$124,762 be relinquished as the project is no longer considered viable. Discussion ensued.
- There are currently 5 pending Open Space/Farmland Protection Projects being administered by the Planning Department.
- The Planning Department continues to close out pending Trail Projects.
- The 2023 Saratoga County Farm Protection and Open Space grant applications were due July 28, 2023. Discussion ensued.
- County Timber Bids are due August 10th for the Edie Road South Project.

Mr. Connolly questioned if the Committee would entertain taking a more aggressive look at County roads as they are being re-paved, to increase the width of the shoulders to 4ft wherever possible. Mr. Grasso suggested that Supervisors Veitch and Connolly discuss the matter with Commissioner Cooke. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Connolly thanked County staff for the prompt action in re-painting the Crosswalk for the Zim Smith Trail over Eastline Road. Mr. Kemper will check with DPW on repainting the Bike Xing markings.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Therese M. Connolly
Clerk of the Board