



Town of Tusten

Natural Resources Inventory and Open Space Plan

MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose: Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting #3
Date and Time: August 15, 2024, 1:00 pm
Location: Via Zoom
Attendees: See Below

Agenda Item	Discussion	Key Decisions & Outcomes
<p>Welcome</p>	<p>Jane Luchsinger, Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) Chair welcomed everyone.</p> <p>Jane Luchsinger, CAC Chair, initiated the approval of past meeting minutes.</p>	<p>Meeting minutes for June 20, 2024</p>
<p>Project Schedule Update</p>	<p>Sarah Starke (MJ) presented an update of the project schedule and key milestones throughout the project.</p> <p>Summer 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Public Engagement • Community Survey <p>Fall 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft NRI • 2nd Public Engagement • Stakeholder Meetings • Initiate Open Space Plan <p>Winter 2024-25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd Public Engagement • Draft Open Space Plan <p>Spring 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Open Space Plan <p>Summer 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of Plan • Implementation 	<p>N/A</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Natural Resources Inventory</p>	<p>Sarah Starke (MJ) provided an update on the Natural Resources Inventory:</p> <p>NRI Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional mapping completed • Narrative in progress • Target Draft Fall 2024 • Draft maps to project website 	<p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Public Engagement</p>	<p>Sarah Starke Hesse (MJ) presented an update of the Public engagement for the project.</p> <p>Public Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Open House #1 • Community Vision Survey Update • Stakeholder Groups <p>Public Workshop #1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 1, 2024, at Town Hall • 25+ attendees • Brief presentation & Q&A • Presented Draft NRI Mapping • Interactive Mapping Exercise • Open Space Visioning <p>Public Workshop Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Space Visioning – Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring clean water and air quality ○ Protection and preservation of open spaces, wildlife habitats and ecosystems ○ Avoid development in flood zones and respecting wetlands and animal habitats ○ Providing recreational opportunities • Recreation – Common Themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of trails and paths for different activities ○ Waterfront and water-based recreation ○ Utilizing lands such as Boy Scout property for recreation and nature-based activities <p>The CAC has a discussion regarding Complete Streets and how a Complete Streets resolution would help with recreational opportunities.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Public Engagement</p>	<p>Sarah Starke (MJ) asked the committee what worked well regarding the Public Open House:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The short presentation was helpful and gave community members plenty of time to interact with the boards • Mapping exercise was helpful, more detail and landmarks should be included to help community member orient themselves • For publicizing, word of mouth and emphasizing meetings at the Town Board meeting was helpful • An email blast will be sent to community members who signed up for updates via the project website announcing the next public engagement <p>The date for the next public engagement has not yet been decided, but it may be helpful to determine a date to include at the end of the mailed survey.</p> <p>Community Visioning Survey Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online and hard copy formats • 5 responses so far – closes September 15 • Publicity – website, social media, Committee, project cards, mailing • MJ preparing flyer and press release • Spread the word! <p>The CAC agreed to send a second press release a week before the survey closes.</p> <p>Stakeholder Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Group Discussions • Virtual via Zoom • Tentatively September 2024 • CAC input on Stakeholders • Potential Stakeholder Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local & Regional Partners ○ Environment & Sustainability ○ Community Groups ○ Recreation • Potential Stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NPS ○ Upper Delaware Council ○ Delaware Highlands Conservancy ○ Conservation Fund ○ NYSDEC ○ Tusten Youth Commission ○ Parks & Public Spaces Committee 	<p>MJ send Survey Flyer and Press Release to CAC</p>
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<p>Public Engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Groups? ○ Other? <p>Other stakeholders mentioned by the CAC included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chamber of Commerce ● Town Board members ● Boy Scout Representatives ● Hunting Clubs 	<p>MJ to send Stakeholder List to CAC</p>
<p>Open Space and Recreation Plan</p>	<p>Sarah Starke (MJ) provided an overview and benefits of the Open Space and Recreation Plan:</p> <p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishes vision for Town-wide network of open spaces & recreation ● Identifies priorities and specific resource protection ● Based on existing conditions identified in NRI, Town, CAC and public input ● Recommends tools to achieve vision <p>What is Open Space?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New York State defines open space as land “which is not intensively developed for residential, commercial, industrial or institutional use. Open space can be publicly or privately owned. It includes agricultural and forest land, undeveloped coastal and estuarine lands, undeveloped scenic lands, public parks and preserves. It also includes water bodies such as lakes and bays. What land is defined as open space depends in part on its surroundings. A vacant lot or a small marsh can be open space in a big city. A narrow corridor or pathway for walking or bicycling is open space even though it is surrounded by developed areas.” <p>The CAC had a discussion regarding the importance of explaining what open space is and including this statement at the next public meeting. The CAC stated it would be beneficial to understand how the community defines open space.</p> <p>The CAC emphasized the importance of making private property owners aware of the tools available to participate in conserving open space.</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Open Space and Recreation Plan</p>	<p>Benefits of Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural systems services – clean water/air, temperature cooling, forestry, flood reduction • Wildlife habitat, biodiversity • Public health – water quality, air quality, scenic beauty, recreation • Community character – forests, farmland, diversity in landscape, recreation opportunities, quality of life • Decreased wildlife/human conflicts <p>Comprehensive Plan Goals Related to Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Balance protection of the Town’s water quality, open spaces, and animal and plant habitats with encouraging economic activities that help conserve the Town’s scenic and rural character” • “Work to create new opportunities for public access to lands and waters to increase recreational and educational options for residents and visitors” <p>The CAC had a discussion on how the Comprehensive Plan goals align with the goals of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. The CAC discussed the potential for better access and balancing the protection of open space while capitalizing on the Town’s scenic and rural character.</p> <p>Following the overview, Sarah Starke (MJ) led a visioning session for the CAC:</p> <p>Visioning Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a vision statement for the Open Space & Recreation Plan • Additional input <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public Open House ○ Survey ○ Stakeholder Groups • What is your vision for the future of open space and recreation within the Town of Tusten? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Less footprints the better ○ More recreation in the Boy Scout property ○ More public recreation ○ Connectivity and interconnectivity ○ Utilizing what is already there (ex. Pathways at Boy Scout property) ○ Private Boy Scouts to land 	<p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>
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<p>Open Space and Recreation Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing tax incentives for landowners so they may contribute to connectivity ○ Tusten is unique ● What natural resources do you see as the biggest priorities in Tusten? (i.e. habitat, water courses, active recreation, open lands, forests, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No single resource is a priority, all resources are a priority and are intertwined 	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>Sarah Starke Hesse (MJ) provided an overview of the next steps in the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue development of NRI ● Community Vision Survey – Closes September 15 ● Stakeholder Group Meetings – TBD September 2024 ● Next CAC Meeting – October 17, 2024 at 1:00 PM via Zoom <p>The MJ Team asked the CAC to share any upcoming community events where the community survey can be publicized.</p>	<p>MJ send meeting summaries to CAC</p>

This meeting summary conveys our understanding of the items discussed and agreements reached at this meeting. Please forward any additions, corrections and/or questions to my attention.

Submitted by:
Grace Sherburne, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, PC

cc: Consultant Team, Conservation Advisory Council, Peter Manning

Conservation Advisory Council

Name	Present
Jane Luchsinger	☑
Cathleen Breen	☑
Bernie Lohmann	☑
Alexandra Climent	✗
Donovan Sylvest	☑

Spencer Branch	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Project Partners

Name	Present
Peter Manning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Consultant Team

Name	Affiliation	Present
Jaclyn Hakes, Project Manager	M.J. Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sarah Starke Hesse	M.J. Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grace Sherburne	M.J. Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jen Ceponis	M.J. Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>