



## Town of Tusten

### Natural Resources Inventory and Open Space Plan

# MEETING SUMMARY

**Purpose:** Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) Meeting #1  
**Date and Time:** April 18, 2024, 1:00 pm  
**Location:** Via Zoom  
**Attendees:** See Below

Agenda Item	Discussion	Key Decisions & Outcomes
<p><b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b></p>	<p>Jane Luchsinger, Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) Chair welcomed everyone.</p> <p>Jane Luchsinger introduced Jaclyn Hakes and the MJ Engineering Team.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Project Overview</b></p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) presented an overview of the project.</p> <p>Roles and Responsibilities for the Town, CAC, and Consultant Team were introduced.</p> <p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) presented an overview of the project tasks. The project tasks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task 1: Project Coordination</li> <li>• Task 2: Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)</li> <li>• Task 3: Open Space Plan (OSP)</li> <li>• Task 4: Public Engagement</li> <li>• Task 5: Implementation</li> </ul> <p>CAC meetings will be conducted bi-monthly at key milestones throughout the project. Monthly coordination calls with a core team (Town staff and CAC Chair) will be conducted throughout the project. These coordination calls will help ensure alignment with the grant.</p> <p>The Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) will include a narrative and map series which examines a range of data including water resources, soils and topography,</p>	<p>N/A</p>

<p><b>Project Overview Cont'd</b></p>	<p>habitats, open space, land use, etc. The NRI can be used as a resource to inform future planning, land use, and the Open Space Plan</p> <p>It is recommended that the consultant team (MJ) examine data from the 2011 Natural Resources and Open Space Inventory.</p> <p>Sarah Starke Hesse (MJ) provided an overview of the Open Space Plan. It will include the results of the Conservation Analysis Tool, a GIS-based model that objectively identifies priority open space. The plan will also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a vision for a Town-wide network of Open Spaces.</li> <li>• Implement key recommendations from the 2021 Comprehensive Plan</li> <li>• Identify specific resource protection</li> <li>• Define conservation tools and strategies</li> </ul> <p>A CAC member inquired about how this information is acquired. Sarah (MJ) stated that basic information (ex. wetlands, stream corridors, habitats) can be retrieved from the New York State Information Gateway. This data is analyzed in a program called ArcGIS and implemented into the NRI.</p> <p>A CAC member mentioned that digital floodplain maps for the Town of Tusten were made approximately 22 years ago.</p> <p>Public Engagement during the project will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Engagement Plan</li> <li>• Project Website</li> <li>• Public Workshops (3)</li> <li>• Community Visioning Survey</li> <li>• Stakeholder Group Meetings</li> </ul> <p>The project website will be established to keep the public informed about the project and schedule. Both online and hard copies of the Community Visioning Survey will be made available to the public.</p> <p>Implementation of the project will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toolbox of Conservation Techniques</li> <li>• Implementation strategy</li> <li>• Landowner outreach</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>
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<p><b>Project Overview Cont'd</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of educational, funding, and technical resources</li> </ul> <p>There was a conversation regarding rezoning in the implementation process. Jaclyn (MJ) stated that resources can be maximized to tackle what the community identifies as being most critical.</p> <p>Sarah Starke Hesse (MJ) gave an overview of the project schedule and milestones throughout the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Spring 2024</b> – Project Kick-off, Project Website, Engagement Plan, Initiate NRI</li> <li>• <b>Summer 2024</b> – 1<sup>st</sup> Public Engagement, Community Survey</li> <li>• <b>Fall 2024</b> – Draft NRI, 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Engagement, Stakeholder Meetings, Initiate Open Space Plan</li> <li>• <b>Winter 2024-25</b> – 3<sup>rd</sup> Public Engagement, Draft Open Space Plan</li> <li>• <b>Spring 2025</b> – Final Open Space Plan</li> <li>• <b>Summer 2025</b> – Adoption of Plan, Implementation</li> </ul> <p>The CAC agreed upon including a link to the project website on the Town of Tusten website.</p> <p>The public engagement opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Project Website:</b> interactive and project-focused, informs public of background, process, and engagement activities, and includes posting of meeting materials</li> <li>• <b>Community Visioning Survey:</b> targeted questions to help identify Open Space Plan vision and goals, will be available online and hard copy formats</li> <li>• <b>Public Workshops (3):</b> In-person or web-based interactive sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Workshop #1 – Present the preliminary Draft NRI</li> <li>○ Workshop #2 – Engage community in the development of the vision, goals, and strategies for the Open Space Plan</li> <li>○ Workshop #3 – To present the preliminary Draft Open Space Plan</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Stakeholder Group Meetings:</b> One day discussion with community stakeholders, partner agencies/organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Upper Delaware Council (UDC)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>
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<p><b>Project Overview Cont'd</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Delaware Highlands Conservancy</li> <li>○ NYSDEC</li> <li>○ County Planning</li> <li>○ Others</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Committee Ambassadors:</b> CAC members will serve as ambassadors to promote the NRI and Open Space Plan which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Sharing public engagement flyers</li> <li>○ Promoting the Community Visioning Survey</li> <li>○ Hosting pop-up tables at community events</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The CAC identified July as being a good opportunity to promote the NRI and OSP. Riverfest was identified as a community event to help promote the community survey and project website. Materials can be provided by MJ to the Town to assist in promotion.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Mini Visioning Session</b></p>	<p>Sarah Starke Hesse (MJ) led a mini visioning discussion with prompt questions for the CAC.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>What challenges do you see for natural resources and open space in Tusten (now and in the future)?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Property owners, the Town doesn't own anything</li> <li>● Legal status of the Boy Scout property</li> <li>● Who will rebuild the dams on the lakes of the Boy Scout property</li> <li>● The Boy Scout property comprises ~24-25% of the total property of the Town of Tusten, hence why it is a major concern</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <b>What opportunities do you envision now and in the future?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Boy Scout property/ transition of ownership</li> <li>● Contiguous hunting areas/camps</li> <li>● The relationship with key players such as DEC, National Park Service, and UDC</li> <li>● Project will provide a blueprint for the Planning Board</li> <li>● The river area</li> <li>● Hunting</li> <li>● Huge percentage of people come for hiking</li> <li>● Plentiful number of camping sites</li> <li>● Thriving Airbnb market</li> <li>● Rural camping experiences</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>N/A</p>

	<p><b>3. Identify your top 3 priorities for open space and recreation within the Town of Tusten.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boy Scout property</li> <li>• More protection, less footprints</li> <li>• The entire Town of Tusten</li> <li>• Existing recreation areas/ designated new recreation areas</li> <li>• Educational opportunities for protected spaces</li> <li>• Passive recreation</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Discussion of Data Collection</b></p>	<p>Sarah Starke Hesse (MJ) led a discussion of the data collection needs and existing datasets.</p> <p>A number of existing datasets will be gathered such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New York State DEC</li> <li>• 2021 Comprehensive Plan Mapping Data</li> <li>• Sullivan County Real Property Services Data</li> <li>• Nature Conservancy Map</li> <li>• Other? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Past floodplain maps from 22 years ago</li> <li>○ There is a more recent one 2 years ago</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>MJ to reach out to Town for existing datasets/maps</p>
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	<p>Sarah Starke Hesse (MJ) provided an overview of the next steps in the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MJ to prepare a Public Engagement Plan</li> <li>• MJ to create the Project Website</li> <li>• MJ to initiate data collection</li> <li>• CAC Meeting #2 will be held via Zoom on Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM</li> <li>• MJ to contact Evan at DEC</li> <li>• MJ to coordinate with Jane on dates for site visit</li> </ul>	<p>The next CAC meeting will be held on Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM.</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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cathleen Breen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alexandra Climent	
Bernnie Lohman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Donovan Sylvest	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## Project Partners

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

## Consultant Team

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