

## Area Nature Walks Available

The Town of Clifton Park and surrounding communities have several interesting tracks available for residents to enjoy on a walking tour. One of these—Old Homestead State Forest Parcel—is included in this mailing. Friends of Clifton Park Open Space would encourage residents to take advantage of these beautiful, scenic vistas to enjoy for both recreational and educational purposes.

Friends of Clifton Park Open Space have sponsored several scheduled walks in various areas throughout the town. These have included the Arongen Trails and the Ushers Road forest preserve. The wetlands of Saratoga Spa State Park have also been explored by local groups. These precious resources can be enjoyed any time of the year and we would suggest that they even rival Delmar's Five Rivers.

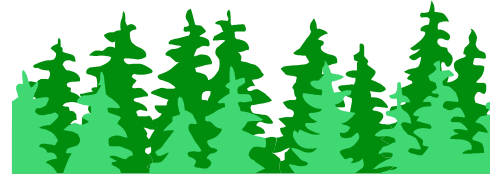
Friends of Clifton Park Open Space is always looking for suggestions for new sponsored walks. We encourage you to bring your suggestions to Frank Berlin at 877-8324. The purpose of these walks is to appreciate different sites and to inform the public about what is nearby in the local community. These walks are short and close to home. Let us know of others in your area.

The Town of Clifton Park covers a variety of geological conditions including clay, sand and wetlands. This broad spectrum of conditions creates unique ecosystems. We hope to develop a presentation in the future about the geological forces

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### **Steering Committee:**

Frank Berlin, *Friends of Veteran's Park*  
Margaret Catellier, *Citizens Assn. for Reasonable Expansion; United Civic Assn. & Neighbors*  
Bill Engleman, *Saratoga Cty Water Quality Committee*  
Gil Kortz, *Clifton Park Zoning Board, past Chair of CP Environmental Conservation Committee*  
Ray Seymour, *President of Board of Directors of Land Trust Of the Saratoga Region*  
Clark Wilson, *Officer of Board of Directors of the Rexford Civic Association*  
Greg Sundik, *Liaison to Town of Clifton Park, ECC*



## Building Sustainable Communities

### **Eben Fodor's 12 MYTHS About Urban Growth**

*We need to bring in business to bring down taxes.*

*This development will give us jobs.*

*Environmental protection will hurt the economy*

*Growth is good for us.*

Perhaps you've heard these arguments stated with utmost certainty but without evidence. Is there not evidence, or is there more evidence which disproves these beliefs.

Here is a short summary of some of the evidence. For more, see Eben Fodor's book [Better, Not Bigger](#) which lists and debunks the following *Twelve Big Myths of Growth*.

1. *Growth provides needed tax revenues.* Check out the tax rates of cities larger than yours. There are a few exceptions but the general rule is: the larger the city, the higher the taxes. That's because development requires water, sewage treatment, road maintenance, police and fire protection, garbage pickup—a host of public services. Almost never do the new taxes cover the new costs. Fodor says: "The bottom line on urban growth is that it rarely pays its own way."
2. *We have to grow to provide jobs.* But there's no guarantee that new jobs will go to local folks. In fact they rarely do. If you compare the 25 fastest growing cities in the U.S. to the 25 slowest growing, you find no significant difference in unemployment rates. Says Fodor: "Creating more local jobs ends up attracting more people, who require more jobs. And services."
3. *We must stimulate and subsidize business growth to have good jobs.* A "good business climate" is one with little regulation, low business taxes, and various public subsidies to business. A study of areas with good and bad business climates (as ranked by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the business press) showed that states with the best business ratings actually have lower growth in per capita incomes than those with the worst. Fodor: "This surprising outcome may be due to the emphasis placed by good-business-climate states on investing resources in businesses rather than directly in people."

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that created these conditions over the past millennium. This is a fascinating story—the results of which we can see at work in more “recent” history such as mining of molding sand in the Jonesville area which supported a cast iron industry in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Please read over the walking tour information enclosed here and take advantage of this fun and free family entertainment this summer. ♦

## DOT Plans Work at Ushers Rd

New York State Department of Transportation and the Town of Clifton Park conducted an open house to outline the proposed changes at the Exit 10, Ushers Road Northway exit. These include widening the road, extending the shoulders, and adding multi-use pathways. Some citizens expressed concern about reducing the rural character of this road and the possibility of increased speed through this area.

Although this is a NYS project, the Town has hosted informational meetings to get information out to the public about DOT’s intentions. Another public meeting will be scheduled for sometime in September. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend. For more information you can contact John Hahn, Director of Development or the Town Clerk’s office on 371-6651.

4. *If we try to limit growth, housing prices will shoot up.* Sounds logical, but it isn’t so. A 1992 study of 14 California cities, half with strong growth controls, half with none, showed no difference in average housing prices. Some of the cities with strong growth controls had the most affordable housing because they had active low-cost housing programs. Fodor says the important factor in housing affordability is not so much house cost as income level, so development that provides mainly low-paying retail jobs makes housing unaffordable.
5. *Environmental protection hurts the economy.* According to a Bank of America study the economies of states with high environmental standards grew consistently faster than those with weak regulations. The Institute of Southern Studies ranked all states according to 20 indicators of economic prosperity and environmental health and found that they rise and fall together. Vermont ranked high on both and Louisiana ranked 50<sup>th</sup> on both.
6. *Growth is inevitable.* There are constitutional limits to the ability of any community to put walls around itself. But dozens of municipalities have capped their population size or rate of growth by legal regulations based on real environmental limits and the real costs of growth to the community.

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**FRIENDS OF CLIFTON PARK OPEN SPACE** would like your *financial help* in sustaining our research and outreach efforts. If you would like to help in this way, please detach, complete and mail the form below with your check made out to: **FCPOS, P.O. Box 821, Clifton Park, New York 12065**

*Thank you very much for your support!*

Yes, I would like to help the Friends of Clifton Park Open Space in their work to preserve the “Park” in Clifton Park.

I would like to contribute:     \$10     \$20     \$30     \$40     \$50     \$75     \$100  
 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to: Friends of Clifton Park Open Space -- or -- FCPOS**

Contributions are not currently deductible as a charitable contribution.

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS:**

**FCPOS GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING**

PLACE: SHENENDEHOWA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

TIME: 7:30 PM, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST

7:30 PM, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19TH

**CLIFTON PARK TOWN BOARD MEETINGS**

PLACE: TOWN HALL

TIME: EVERY MONDAY NIGHT, 7:00 PM

**CLIFTON PARK PLANNING BOARD MEETINGS**

PLACE: TOWN HALL

TIME: EVERY 2ND & 4TH TUESDAY NIGHT, 7:00 PM

**CONCERNED ABOUT CLEARCUTTING OF TREE IN THE NORTHWAY MEDIAN AND ALONG THE I-87 RIGHT OF WAY?**

Call Dan Moore, Director of Design for these projects and NYS Department of Transportation, Region 1 at (518) 474-3015 to express your objections and ideas you may have about preferable alternatives.

Friends of Clifton Park Open Space  
PO Box 821  
Clifton Park, New York 12065

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

# There are Many Ways You Can Help.....

Our public meetings are held most every month on the third Thursday. (See schedule at left) Perhaps you would like to help the group in some way but cannot attend the meetings to get involved.

Don't fear...there are many tasks that need addressing and maybe you have a limited amount of time to lend to a specific task. Listed below you will find some of the jobs we would appreciate if you could lend a hand at. Call Margaret Catellier at 371-6392 if you are interested in assisting the group in one of these ways.

Thanks in advance!

1. Take photographs of some of the scenic areas around you. These can be recreational, ecological, agricultural or just lovely to look at. Remember all the different seasons of the year.
2. Be available on an ad hoc basis to distribute posters about special public meetings, walks, events, etc.
3. Take charge of sending press releases to the local papers. We would provide the list of mailing, emailing or faxing names, numbers or addresses as well as the articles. Just take care of getting them out on a timely basis.
4. Do research on various topics—track “Smart Growth” bills in the NYS Legislature, review successful open space town and zoning laws in other areas like Red Hook, NY or Pittsford, NY.
5. Arrange fund-raising activities---an Art Exhibit, Bake Sale or Tag sale, neighborhood drives, etc.
6. Help with a special event like the Agricultural Informational Forum we sponsored in April.❖

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7. *If you don't like growth, you're a NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) or an ANTI (against everything)*. These accusations are meant more to shut people up than to examine their real motives. Says Fodor: "A NIMBY is more likely to be someone who cares enough about the future of his or her community to get out and protect it.."
8. *Most people don't support environmental protection*. Polls and surveys have disproved this belief for decades. Fodor cites examples from Oregon, Los Angeles, Colorado and the U. S. as a whole. The fraction of respondents who say environmental quality is more important than further economic growth almost always tops 70%.
9. *We have to grow or die*. This statement is tossed around lightly and often, but if you may wonder what it means. Fodor points out, quoting several economic studies, that many kinds of growth cost more than the benefits they bring. So the more growth, the poorer we get.
10. *Vacant land is just going to waste*. Studies from all over show that open land pays far more—often twice as much—in property taxes than it costs in services. Cows don't put their kids in school; trees don't put potholes in the roads. Open space absorbs floods, recharges aquifers, cleans the air, harbors wildlife, and measurably increases the value of property nearby. We should value it and pay for it to be there.
11. *Beauty is no basis for policy*. One of the saddest things about municipal meetings is their tendency to trivialize people who complain that a proposed development will be ugly. Dollars are not necessarily more real or important than beauty. In fact beauty can translate directly into dollars. For example, undeveloped surroundings can add \$100,000 to the price of a home.

12. *Environmentalists are just another special interest*. A developer who will directly profit from a project is a special interest. A citizen with no financial stake is fighting for the public interest, the long term the good of the whole community.

The balance between development and Open Space is an important one for any community. Towns throughout Saratoga County are struggling with these issues. In the June issue of the Saratoga Business Journal, a feature article appeared: "Comprehensive Plans Help Charge The Future For Saratoga And Surrounding Communities". The opening paragraph of this article states,

"Everyone wants to live in a nice neighborhood, raise their children in a safe environment and enjoy the town in which they live. Modern building techniques have taken what were once peaceful communities where children walked to school and changed them into places where jobs, grocery stores, community centers and schools are separated from residential areas. Even short trips have families piling into cars because modern building is not pedestrian friendly. This building technique has existed since the 1930's, but has begun to decline as people realize that something is missing in their cities and towns. To preserve the historic character of a town or the rural atmosphere of a community, citizens have begun to take action.

The comprehensive plan is the number one tool for defining the goals and objectives desired by a community. Through community consensus, a vision for the future can be compiled and enacted."

As integral members of the community, business leaders want to understand the importance of comprehensive plans in targeting and facilitating their building efforts. All communities need both development and open space. Both groups' must respect each others' positions in order to create communities of value to us all.