

Town Open Space Committee Releases Survey Results

Public Supports Open Space Protection in Clifton Park

The Town of Clifton Park and Audubon New York issued a press release and conducted a presentation at the Town Board Meeting on Monday, April 1st. Jim Romano and David Miller, both co-chairs of the Open Space Committee, had a slide show prepared to summarize the analysis of the town's survey conducted in November, 2001. They handed out booklets with the particulars on 10 questions posed to residents in the initial town-wide survey.

In their press release they noted the high importance give to all categories. It stated:

The survey results are in and the residents, farmers, commercial and industrial owners in the Town of Clifton Park have given their overwhelming support of the town's open space initiative. Typical surveys have a return rate of 3-5%, but Clifton Park's survey had an astounding 25% rate of return with a total of 3,043 questionnaires completed. When non-resident landowners, landlords and residents that own multiple parcels are taken into consideration the return rate is closer to 35%.

Question #8 Would you support the Town..investing in open space projects in the future....Answer: 80% said, "Yes"

The Town Supervisor, Phil Barrett commented, "Open space

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STEERING COMMITTEE

Frank Berlin, Friends of Veteran's Park

Margaret Catellier, Citizens Assn. for Reasonable Expansion

Gil Kortz, Clifton Park Zoning Bd, past Chair Clifton Park ECC

Ray Seymour, Land Trust of the Saratoga Region

Clark Wilson, Rexford Civic Association

Susan Burton, League of Women Voters of Saratoga County



10 Steps NYS Can Take to Combat Sprawl & Effectively Manage Growth

Reprinted from Sierra Club Magazine

1. **Strength State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).**
Implement regulations to combat sprawl such as requiring the Dept of Environment Conservation (DEC) and Dept of State (DOS) training and certification for all state, regional and local officials involved in SEQRA decision-making.
2. **Strengthen local & regional comprehensive planning.**
Require localities and regional bodies (counties, metro areas, etc.) to plan comprehensively.
Amend State law to make comprehensive planning mandatory and an integral part of smart growth planning.
Require localities to adopt local laws, ordinances and regulations consistent for comprehensive/smart growth plans.
3. **Provide State guidance & assistance for local and regional bodies comprehensive planning.**
Make State Geographic Information Systems (GIS) available.
Offer State aid for planning.
Provide State training for DOS and other agencies.

Strengthen SEQRA, Require Planning, Provide Tools & Money, Certify Plans, Review Aid to & Costs of Sprawl, Strengthen Tools & Laws for Protection and Planning, Encourage Rehabilitation, Enable Infrastructure that Conserves Resources

4. **Require State Certification of Local Comprehensive Plans.**
Require State to use as a planning tool for allocation of State and Federal aid. Designate DOS as the lead agency.
5. **Require State Agencies to Review and Report.** The Governor and Legislature could receive reports on Federal and State financial aid and tax benefits that promote sprawl and changes in aid and tax benefits that could deter sprawl and promote efficient development.

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protection affects the future quality of life in our town. The people of Clifton Park want to be involved and once again have shown their enthusiasm and town spirit in responding to the Open Space Committee's survey"

The survey provided eight questions to ascertain the relative importance of the different aspects of open space protection to the people of Clifton Park. The areas covered as reported in the survey results are:

1. Drinking water quality—94% support
2. Open space and rural character—92% support
3. Natural areas and wildlife habitats—87% support
4. Farmland and Agriculture—85% support
5. Trail systems and bike paths—77% support
6. Cultural resources such as historic sites—77% support
7. Recreational parks and playgrounds—72% support

The last question, which asked whether the respondents would support the Town of Clifton Park's investing in open space projects in the future to conserve important open space resources, was supported by 80% of the respondents, only 7% indicated opposition and 13% remained undecided.

Jim Romano, Co-Chair of the Town's Open Space Committee, commented on the survey response, "We are thrilled to have had such an overwhelmingly positive response to the questionnaire in favor of public investment for open space protection and will continue to work in cooperation with the people of Clifton Park,

as we have for the past year and a half, to benefit the entire community."

To date, the Open Space Committee's comprehensive campaign has involved the public every step of the way. With public participation as a top priority, their extensive community outreach effort has included a natural resources inventory, public informational meetings, local media conferences, presentations to civic groups, stakeholder focus meetings, an historic trends video, an all-day charrette and, most recently, the town-wide survey.

*For more information on the Open Space Committee contact:
Jason Kemper, Town of Clifton Park at (518) 371-6054 or
David J. Miller, Audubon New York (518) 869-9731*

David Miller, the Town's other Co-Chair and Executive Directory of Audubon New York invited continued public participation, "With the town's support, we are truly excited to take the next steps in drafting an open space protection plan for Clifton Park and invite all the people to have a voice in this important process by participating in the public hearings this spring and summer."

With the vast majority of surveys revealing unequivocal support for all aspect of land conservation and for the public investment to make it happen, the town's Open Space Committee will begin the process of drafting an Open Space Protection Plan. Public comment will be sought at hearings to be held this spring and summer. The final draft will then be prepared from the comments received and presented to the Clifton Park Town Board in the fall of 2002 for adoption. ❖

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

Town Open Space Committee

Next Step: Draft a Plan

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The Town of Clifton Park's Open Space Committee has drafted and outline for the Open Space Plan they will be presenting to the town & its residents later this year. The initial outline included:

Acknowledgements & Executive Summary

I. Introduction & Background

- A. Brief Description of Community Setting & Location of Clifton Park in the Capital District Region
- B. Ongoing Development and Growth Pressures
- C. Open space Conservation Initiative in Clifton Park to Date
- D. Potential for Loss of Remaining Open Space Resources
- E. Organization of the Plan

II. Public Visioning—Defining the Open Space Conservation Opportunities & Challenges

- A. Summary of Public Participation Process
 1. Community Survey 2001
 2. Focus Group Meetings
 3. Public Workshop & Design Charrette
 4. Open Space Presentations to Community Organizations
 5. Community Survey 2002 Findings
- B. Identified Needs/Ideal for Additional Resource Protection
- C. Community Concerns/Planning Obstacles
- D. Overall Open Space and Growth Vision
- E. Community's Open Space Targets and Goals
- F. Potential Solutions Identified

10 Steps....

6. ***Require the State to Set Priorities for Growth Management & Protection of Natural Resources.***
Designate special areas for preservation (areas of statewide concern).
Designate "benchmarks" for "livability" in urban, suburban, and rural areas.
7. ***Strengthen Protection Tools.***
Critical natural areas—such as watersheds, wetlands, virgin forests, farm lands—can be protected with land trusts, easements, etc.
8. ***Strengthen & Encourage More Use of Existing State Law.***
Effective local planning today exist today such as incentive zoning, overlay districts, inter-municipal agreements, planned unit development and temporary and permanent easements.
9. ***Adopt State Laws With More Flexibility.***
More flexibility for urban rehabilitation is needed including reuse of existing infrastructure and buildings, and encouragement of urban redevelopment.
10. ***Enable and Support Provision of Infrastructure and Services that Conserve Resources and Result in Efficient Development.***
Linking the provisioning of basic services such as local government, post offices, parks, shopping and trails & recreational areas into accessible networks can help nurture a community while reducing expenses and improving quality of life and civic participation.

- III Creating the Greenprint: Resource Analysis
 - A. Summary of Existing Open space Resources
 - 1. Special Place of Rural Character
 - 2. Farmland and Viable Agriculture
 - 3. Local Recreational Parks, Ball fields and Playgrounds
 - 4. Unique Natural Areas, Areas that Provide Habitat for Wildlife
 - 5. Accessible Trail Systems and Bike Paths
 - 6. Land that Protects Drinking Water Quality
 - 7. Cultural Resources and Historic Sites
 - B. Resource Evaluation
 - 1. Discussion of Selected Rating System
 - 2. Summary of Rating Process and Methodology
 - 3. Concepts for Open Space Resource conservation
 - a. Gaps in Resource Protection
 - b. Identified Needs for Additional Resource Protection
 - c. Connectivity and Contiguity
 - d. Identified Potential Areas to Target for Protection
 - C. Fiscal Analysis
 - 1. Fiscal Impact Study: Methodology and Analysis
 - 2. Fiscal Evaluation and Findings
- IV Recommended Greenprint Strategies
 - A. Specific Targeted Areas
 - B. Community/Government Initiatives
 - C. Community Financing
 - D. Design concepts and Guidelines
 - E. Legal Tools
 - F. Planning Programs
 - G. Fiscal Tax Tools
 - H. Education/Public Outreach
 - I. Inter-municipal and Regional Initiatives
 - J. Private Sector Support and Initiatives

- V Implementation Action Plan
 - A. Implementation Team & Process
 - B. Funding Sources
 - C. Schedule for Action
 - 1. Short Term
 - 2. Medium Term
 - 3. Long Term

CALENDAR OF EVENTS.....

FCPOS GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

Place: Shenendehowa United Methodist Church
 Date: Thursday, May 16th, 2002
 Time: 7:30 PM

FCPOS GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

Place: Shenendehowa United Methodist Church
 Date: Thursday, June 20th, 2002
 Time: 7:30 PM

Visit us on our web site---now via the Town's home page www.cliftonpark.org—get linked to FCPOS at www.cpopenspace.org!!!
Let us know if you would prefer to get our newsletter via email

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www.cpopenspace.org

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