

# Mission Statement



## Authorization

The Town of Lewisboro hereby creates a Committee hereinafter known as the Town of Lewisboro Open Space and Preserves Advisory Committee (the "Committee") which will advise the Parks and Recreation Department and, upon request, the Town Board on issues relating to open space and preserves.

## Membership

The Committee will consist of up to eleven (11) members appointed by the Town Board for two (2) year terms. In making such appointments, the Town Board shall endeavor to, to the extent possible, select residents from a cross-section of the hamlets which comprise the Town of Lewisboro and select individuals who have

interest, knowledge, or related skills in helping to manage or promote our preserves and further look for opportunities to utilize and preserve open space. Said members shall serve without compensation. All members must be approved by the Town Board. Said members may, from time to time, be encouraged to complete training and continuing education programs, which properly further the function of the Committee. Included in the eleven (11) should be, to the extent possible, at least one (1) member from each of the (a) Parks and Recreation Advisory Council (PRAC) and (b) Conservation Advisory Council (CAC). In addition, the Town Board may appoint as many non-voting Associate members as it sees fit. No person who is a member of the Town Board shall be eligible for membership on the Committee.

## Terms of Members First Appointed

The terms of members of the Committee first appointed shall be for terms so fixed that the terms of six members shall expire at the end of the first calendar year in which said members

were initially appointed. The terms of the remaining five members shall expire at the end of the second calendar year in which said members were initially appointed. At the expiration of the term of each member first appointed, his or her successor shall be appointed, or such member shall be reappointed for a term of two years. For those on the Committee that are the member representing the PRAC or CAC, their position on this Committee shall expire if their term on either of those respective committees expires and they are not reappointed to a new term at which point a new member from either of those committees is selected by the Chair of that committee and approved by the Town Board.

## **Chairperson**

The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Town Board. All meetings of the Committee shall be held at the call of the Chairperson and at such other times as the Committee may determine. Such Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Committee unless absent, in which event the Committee shall choose a member to preside at said meeting.

## **Removal of Members**

The Town Board shall have the power to remove any member of the Committee for cause. Any Committee member may be removed for non-compliance with minimum requirements relating to meeting attendance and training as established by the Town Board.

## **Vacancy in Office**

If a vacancy shall occur otherwise than by expiration of term, the Town Board shall appoint a new member to serve out the unexpired term.

## **Meetings**

Meetings shall be conducted on a regular basis, open to the public, and conducted within a Town facility. Notice of the time, place and location of such meetings shall be duly published in accordance with the laws of the State of New York. A quorum of five members shall be necessary to transact business and a vote of five members of the Committee is required for the recommendation to the Town Board of a particular parcel for possible action. Minutes of the meetings shall be kept and maintained by the Committee.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Committee, in coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department, is to manage and supervise town owned preserves and park trail systems. Additionally, the

Committee shall make recommendations to the Town Board regarding opportunities to utilize and preserve open space and create new trails.

The Committee may also research inter-municipal efforts to preserve open space and recommend participation by the Town where deemed appropriate. The properties considered to serve this public purpose must be consistent with the goals of the Master Plan, provide a positive environmental purpose, and be referred to the Town Board for final approval.

The Committee shall be responsible for managing the Brownell, Leon Levy, Momsen, and Old Field Preserves, and trail systems at Onatru Farm Park and Preserve, Lewisboro Town Park and Fox Valley Park. New preserves could be added to this list in the future. In all instances the Town has a fiduciary obligation to preserve these assets together with easements, covenants and restrictions both physically and legally in addition to making them available for recreation and environmental education.

## **Function**

- Promote the maintenance, improvement and creation of trails within the preserves.
- Organize and champion the creation of management plans for each Town Preserve and present them to the Town Board for approval. Coordinate the implementation of preserve management plans.
- Recommend methods of implementation for each preserve management plan after considering the advantages and disadvantages of alternative ownership and access to professional preserve management.
- Advise the Parks and Recreation Department, and recommend for approval, all new additions, improvements and construction in town owned preserves and trail systems such as, but not limited to, kiosks, benches, bridges, signage, deer exclosures, invasives removal/restoration, new trails and wetland activity. Request the town Wetland Inspector approval for all construction within the 150-foot town wetland buffer. The Town Board shall give final approval for new trails following approval by the Committee.
- Offer guidance to the Parks and Recreation Department on policies and procedure adopted to pre-approve organized events and activities when such use includes disturbing or removing flora and other organic substances or leaving non-native objects or materials in the preserve after the activity.

- Draft and propose rules and regulations for the public use of the Preserves for approval, dissemination, and enforcement by the Parks and Recreation Department
- Protect town owned trails and preserves from damage by reviewing applications and making recommendations for approval or non-approval of non-emergency motorized vehicle use, in town preserves.
- Identify available sources for grants, draft grant applications with supporting documentation, and recommend for approval by the Parks and Recreation Department and/or the Town Supervisor. Review proposals and grant applications for town owned preserve and trail system work, additions, enhancements prior to commencing work or grant submission. Monitor compliance with grant conditions. To the extent possible, keep confidential any grant application as may be required for donors who wish a level of anonymity or confidentiality.
- Establish the specific criteria for evaluation of parcels taking into consideration such factors as; the Master Plan for the Town, protection of surface waters and aquifers, wetlands and buffers, steep slopes, key roads and vistas, recreation potential, unusual qualities, including vistas and viewshed, historic and/or cultural significance, unique or prominent natural features, location and any such other factors that the Committee and/or the Town Board deems relevant.
- Keep abreast of current and potential market opportunities and provide a preliminary market-value analysis both as developed and undeveloped land that includes a realistic assessment of the potential for development in light of planning, zoning and environmental controls.
- Investigate the means of obtaining the parcels and/or development rights, as well as research collaborative efforts of financing, through private donations, public grants on state, county and local levels, and Town participation. Some examples of this are gifts, easements, purchase/grant combinations, or outright purchases using a bond or other creative financing to achieve the intended result.
- Present recommendations to the Parks and Recreation Department and Town Board for approval of specific action and/or alternatives based on its factual assessment of the opportunities, methods available, and necessity for intervention by the Town.

- Identify and index the easements to which the Town owns rights as a basis for proposing to Parks and Recreation Department and, upon request, the Town Board what the optimum use, if any, is of each easement.