

OPEN SPACE AND PRESERVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MISSION STATEMENT

1. 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.

2. Membership:

The Open Space and Preserves Advisory 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 represent, to the extent possible, a cross-section of the hamlets which comprise the Town of Lewisboro who have interest, knowledge, or related skills in helping to manage or promote our preserves and 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) shall be at least one (1) member from each of; the Parks and Recreation Advisory Council (PRAC) and 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.

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. Purpose:

The purpose of the Open Space and Preserves Advisory Committee is to make recommendations to the Town Board regarding opportunities to utilize and preserve open space. 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. Additionally, the Town currently owns or has responsibility for managing the Brownell, Leon Levy, Momsen, Old Field and Onatru Preserves. 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.

9. Function:

- 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
- 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 any and all approved 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
- Promote the maintenance, improvement and creation of trails within the preserves