

# October 18, 2006

Open Space Committee

**Present:** Dan Sherr, Patte Doran, Susan Payne, Diane Dupuis

**Guests:** Tim Abbott, Linda Frank, Susan Branson, Addie Roberts, Kelly Boling, Chris Charles, Betsy Corrigan, Valerie Friedman

Chairman, Dan Sherr called the meeting to order at 5:05pm.

**MOTION: to accept the minutes from the March 15, 2006, May 17, 2006 and September 20, 2006 meeting of the Open Space Committee as submitted was made by Patte Doran, seconded by Dan Sherr, passed unanimously.**

Dan Sherr made introductions all around and asked Susan Payne to speak about Steep Rock Association open space preservation. Susan Payne began her presentation by showing a map with Steep Rock protected areas. Ms. Payne stated that at present there are 5483 acres permanently preserved or 22.1% in the Town of Washington, of that amount Steep Rock has 4235 acres or 17%. The Town goal for permanent preservation is 30% by 2015. Referring to the map Susan stated that Steep Rock Association originally started preservation of the Shepaug River corridor and has since expanded into other areas. Dan Sherr asked for specifics on the type of preserved open space. Ms. Payne stated that 2423 acres were taken in fee and 1812 acres in easements. She added that easements are a big responsibility with the monitoring, stewardship etc. that is involved. There was some discussion on preservation in village centers.

Tim Abbott, program director for The Litchfield Hills Greenprint spoke next. Mr. Abbott began by stating that the Litchfield Hills Greenprint is a partnership of the Trust for Public Land and the Housatonic Valley Association, he started on board in January of 2006. The goal of the Litchfield Hills Greenprint is to organize conservation information locally and see what needs to be addressed. Litchfield Hills Greenprint includes 25 towns. Lind Frank asked about funding, Mr. Abbott stated that funding comes from private donors. Tim presented two maps; one of the entire Greenprint area and one of just Washington. The maps are color coordinated and show where there is a concentration of conservation priorities. The seven resource categories are: working landscape, water quality, wildlife habitat, forest cover, recreational opportunities, scenic quality and adaptive use. Patte Doran asked if the work was going to be shared with the legislators. Mr. Abbott felt that the state government considers this regional planning and doesn't want to be involved.

Tim Abbott has spoken to ten of the 25 towns included in the Greenprint. Dan Sherr felt that discussions between area towns would help so they weren't working in a vacuum. Dan asked if economic sprawl has been looked at, Tim stated that it has not been a huge part of the work so far. Mr. Abbott went on to say that he is working on a "threat assessment" for areas that have development potential; he feels that towns at risk are Goshen, Bethlehem, New Milford and Woodbury.

Kelly Boling asked about the duration of the Greenprint project. Tim answered that things are constantly changing and the Greenprint was created to be a long term project, he expects to do annual updates. Mr. Abbott left Open Space members with the Regional and Washington Greenprint maps as well as the following thoughts: he would like to see continued discussions, keep the data current, discuss open space bonding pros and cons and have a meeting next year involving the community.

The Chairman Dan Sherr called the meeting adjourned at 6:40pm.

**Next scheduled meeting of the Open Space Committee is November 15, 2006 at 5:00pm.**

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary