

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE Meeting Notes

June 12, 2025 – The Stable 7:00PM

PRESENT: Jim Bostler, Matt Lindenberg, Frank Mortimer, Nancy Bigos

Special Planning Board Meeting at Village Hall: Alex Pastore, Jim Van Goor

Absent: Ralph Currey, Dave Sayles

Summary

There was not a quorum present so there was no official business conducted. There was also a special Planning Board meeting at Village Hall concerning Affordable Housing which was attended by two Open Space Committee (OSC) members, Jim Van Goor and Alex Pastore.

The focus of the meeting turned to the tax referendum responsibilities, summer events and scheduling of meetings.

The meeting notes will remain topical only and will not go into great details about conversations, etc. Also, the notes will stress follow-ups and the appropriate person who is responsible.

Topics and Follow-ups

I. Public Comment

There was no public comment..

II. Approval of May Meeting Notes

The May meeting notes were not approved due to the lack of a quorum.

IV. Liaison Reports

- Village Council
 - Frank Mortimer summarized the Village Council issues as they pertain to the OSC. Most issues will be addressed in the agenda items.
- Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board {PRC}
 - Main topic was the proposal from the NY/NJ Tail Center. Funding has been secured, and we are awaiting an updated proposal from them.
- Fields Committee
 - With the resignation of Bob Lasky, discussions were concerning who and how long for his replacement. Nothing was determined.
- Planning Board
 - The Planning Board liaison was not present but was attending the special Planning Board Meeting covering affordable housing..

V. Open Space Tax Referendum

The Village Council approved adding the tax referendum to the ballot in November. Frank Mortimer will be working with others on the wording of the referendum which will be critical. The final document will need Village Council Approval, to be approved before our next meeting in July.

Continued discussions on this topic centered on responsibilities and deadlines as it pertains to the OSC.

- Matt will be the point-person on public documents concerning the referendum.
- In-person Early Voting begins October 25th and ends November 2nd. Mailing of vote by mail Ballots begin September 20th. We should be ready with communications to the public by the first week of September,
- Communications with the various Ridgewood Committees will be critical to the passing of the referendum. Scheduling meetings with the various committees need to be done immediately for early September. We will need the final wording of the referendum before the meeting.
- Jim and Alex will work on the acquisitions and funding issues. Initial report ready by the July meeting.
- The July OSC Meeting will be the last official summer meeting.

VI. Green Acres Diversion/2024 Progress/2025 Plan/Frank Mortimer

Initial paperwork was submitted to Trenton ahead of schedule and we will continue to monitor the situation. This could be a big help in securing grant funds for future projects, once remediation is final.

VI. Schedler Park Property/Update

Ridgewood representatives will be meeting with SHPO regarding the development of the park. The goal of the meeting is to finalize the plans for development of the field as a multi-purpose park.

VIII. Events

2025 Park Walks/Updates – The Children’s Sensory Garden Walk was a huge success. Cynthia Halaby, who conducted the walk, was very pleased with the turnout and did an excellent job hosting it. She was thankful to the OSC for helping in publicizing and participating in the event.

The July Walks are Grove Park on the 12th and Graydon Pool on the 26th. We still do not have a speaker for the Graydon Walk but Jim will substitute, if necessary,

Park Stewardships –

Rain gardens – OSC will continue to investigate the potential of this process as it pertains to Open Space.

Habernickel – Volunteers continue to enhance this park through the Women’s Garden Club of Ridgewood.

Princeton Park Stewardship Example – OSC talked about this program which was forwarded to us by Nancy Bigos. It would be difficult to replicate completely due to the personnel needed and the difference in the town’s populations, but a smaller version should be investigated.

IX. New Business

A brief discussion centered on the NY/NJ Trail Conference Proposal based on the latest update.

The parks included in this proposal are Habernickel, Grove Park, Kings Pond/Gypsy Pond, Twinney Pond Park and the Dunham Trail.. It is a timely proposal given the stage of disrepair in many of our parks.

X. Future Meetings

There will be a July OSC Meeting, and the August meeting will be cancelled. The committee does have deadline commitments in early September so there may be an early meeting in September as yet to be determined.

XII. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Open Space Thursday, July 10th, 2025 – Time 7:00 PM – at The Stable

Submitted By: James Bostler – OSC Committee Secretary/Chairman