

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE Meeting Notes

July 10th, 2025 – The Stable 7:00PM

PRESENT: Jim Bostler, Matt Lindenberg, Frank Mortimer, Siobhan Winograd, Katie Frey, Jim Van Goor, Ralph Currey, Jessica Van Aken (New Intern)

Absent: Alex Pastore, Dave Sayles, Nancy Bigos (Vacation)

Summary

We welcome Jessica Van Aken to the Open Space Committee as the new intern. She has been assigned to help Matt with his role in the tax referendum issue. Her skills should enhance Matt's already excellent contributions.

The meeting's focus centered on the upcoming Tax Referendum ballot in November. Everyone was assigned specific tasks that need to be done to publicize the benefits of this assessment. There will be no August meeting, but completion of the tasks assigned should be finished and ready to move on in September.

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 June meeting did not have a quorum and no business was conducted. The May meeting notes were approved. There was no official June Meeting notes issued due to the lack of a quorum.

IV. Liaison Reports

- Village Council
 - Frank Mortimer indicated that the Village Council has approved the wording of the tax referendum on the ballot.
- 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
 - The replacement for Bob Lasky has not been found as yet.
- Planning Board
 - Jim Van Goor briefed us on the Affordable Housing meeting in June. Ridgewood is fulfilling its responsibility and there is no conflict with the OSC properties.

V. Open Space Tax Referendum

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

- Matt has the role as the point-person on public documents concerning the referendum. We will use his Power Point slides outlining the OSC referendum as our messaging theme. This storyline will be used when we meet with other committees, so our story is consistent with all committee members.
- Jessica will work with Matt in the development of our social media program. Jessica, Katie, Frank and Matt will meet on the August 14th to finalize the brochure that will be mailed to the Ridgewood Community.
- Communications with the various Ridgewood Committees will be critical to the passing of the referendum. Scheduling meetings with the various committees has begun. HILT and the Green Team Meetings have already been scheduled. Jim will put together a schedule summary to update with the meeting dates and committee contacts.
- Jim and Alex will work on the acquisitions and funding issues
- The OSC will have a booth at the Street Fair on September 14th from 11:00 thru 5:00PM. Jim will work at the booth and appreciates any help from any committee member who can attend.
- Frank will develop a press release for Carol at Ridgewood e-communications.
- Jim will work on a letter to the editor, gather edits and input and publish under his and the committee's name.
- There is a podcast by Jeanne Johnson that we need to schedule as well as tapping into Beth Ann communications. Siobhan is working on the set-up for these venues.

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 meeting is scheduled for July 21st. The goal of the meeting is to finalize the plans for development of the field as a multi-purpose park. Either Jim or Ralph will call in during the public comment section of the meeting.

VIII. Events

2025 Park Walks/Updates –

The July Walks are Grove Park on the 12th and Graydon Pool on the 26th. Jim B. will handle both walks.

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 state of disrepair in many of our parks.

X. Future Meetings

There will not be an August OSC Meeting, the committee does have deadline commitments in early September so there will be communication between persons responsible for activities outlined previously.

XII. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Open Space Thursday, September 11th, 2025 – Time 7:00 PM – at The Stable

Submitted By: James Bostler – OSC Committee Secretary/Chairman