

MEETING MINUTES - HALFMOON  
TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE (TOSC)  
July 17, 2023

1. OPENING – We opened our meeting at 7:02 pm, in the Halfmoon Town Hall and on line.

ATTENDANCE –TOSC Members Mike Meyer, John Mitchell and Henrietta (Henny) O’Grady attended along with Paul (PJ) Maiello in the James Bold Room. William (Bill) Herman was absent and excused and the Town Board was not represented. We were also visited by Halfmoon residents David Behm, who joined us via MS Teams, while Jim Floud, Michael Guenette, Gail Mitchell, Christian Silvia and Glenn Swatling were there in person.

2. MEETING MINUTES – Meeting minutes from April 17, 2023 were approved, as amended.
3. GRANT PROJECT UPDATE – The June 2023 Grant Department Report was reviewed. The Crescent Park (Canal Road) Trailhead parking work is approved and funded and the construction contract is in final negotiations. The Floud Memorial Preserve design is being finalized and grant proposals were submitted. The Erie Canal Towpath Link Trail work plan is being finalized with DEC. We applied for TAP funds for the Sitterly Road Pedestrian Safety Trail. The 1,350 foot Champlain Canalway Trail (CCT) trail and new trailhead parking north of Upper Newtown Road is in process and we applied for funds for the remaining 1.4 miles to Mechanicville. We are starting the process to revise the 15-year-old Halfmoon Waterfront Vision Plan.
4. SERIES OF SEVEN 2024 WALKS IN TOWN PARK - Halfmoon resident David Behm is seeking support to run a series of seven guided walks in the Town Park, next year, to identify and discuss wildflowers. The first one planned is a winter one, anticipated for Saturday, 2/24/24. He will give access to a cell phone APP that documents dozens of wildflowers and he would place numbered flags in anticipation of each walk. TOSC enthusiastically agreed to support him and encouraged him in all our other town parks, too. David said he has already studied Swatling Falls.
5. VOSBURGH & SWATLING FALLS PRESERVE STATUS – The Vosburgh Nature Preserve trail work needs several consecutive dry weeks to be finished; however, an official 2023 opening is still targeted. The Swatling Falls Nature Preserve is open and ready for new trails from Creekview Estates and Betts Farm PDD’s. Recent floods washed away gravel on both end of both bridges. The town is expected to apply appropriate erosion-resistant repairs.
6. 2023 TOWN SPONSORED TRAIL WALKS – The Town accomplished the Zim Smith walk and picnic on June 3, which is National Trails Day. The next walk will be on the Champlain Canalway Trail, on 9/16/23, with a picnic in Lighthouse Park. The final one will be the Erie Canal Towpath with a picnic at the Historical Building. TOSC would like them better advertised. As an example, the Summer Navigator does not advise of the Erie Canal Towpath walk.
7. HANKS HOLLOW, CREEKVIEW ESTATES, BETTS FARM, MOTT ORCHARD and other PDD’s – John did not get an official update from Rich Harris. However, we shared that Hanks Hollow, Creekview Estates and Betts Farm PDD’s continue building infrastructures and buildings and are doing some casual trail work. All of the other planned trail-containing PDD’s show no active construction. We are considering assigning one or more TOSC members to each PDD to follow these PDD’s and to arrange for tours, etc., as appropriate.
8. TOSC ORGANIZATIONAL DISCUSSIONS – We encouraged our visitors to consider joining TOSC – which can happen during the year and not just at the January Organizational Meeting. Candidates should contact the Town Board, thru Supervisor Tollisen. We also talked about our Trail Map and how Rich Harris is planning to revise it. .
9. Comprehensive Plan Update Committee (CPUC) – Bill Herman, who represents TOSC on the CPUC, wrote a report which was read to everyone. In it, he said they were going to focus on four items - Transportation and Mobility, Economic Growth, Neighborhoods and Housing, and Recreation and Open Space/Natural Resources.
10. MURALS UNDER CRESCENT BRIDGE - We agreed to ask the Town Board to support one or more murals to be painted on the New York State Route 9 Crescent Bridge abutment, near Terminal Road. Henny will draft something for John to finalize and present to the Board.
11. CONCLUSION – The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM. The final 2023 TOSC meeting date will be on the Monday evening of 10/16/23, at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

John Mitchell. TOSC Chair