



# City of Saratoga Springs

## Open Space Plan Update

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### MEETING SUMMARY

**Purpose:** Open Space Steering Committee Kick-off Meeting  
**Date and Time:** Friday, December 11, 2020, 2:00 - 3:00 PM  
**Location:** Via Zoom  
**Attendees:** See Attached

Agenda Item	Discussion	Key Decisions & Outcomes
<b>Welcome/ Introductions</b>	Christina Carton, Open Space Plan Steering Committee Chair welcomed everyone.  Christina Carton introduced Jaclyn Hakes, M.J. Engineering (MJ).	N/A
<b>Project Overview</b>	Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) presented an overview of the project.  Roles and Responsibilities for the Steering Committee, City staff, and Consultant Team were introduced. The Steering Committee was established to guide the Open Space Plan update process.  Christina Carton and Jaclyn Hakes presented an overview of the Roadmap for Updating the Open Space Plan.  Ms. Hakes presented an overview of the project tasks. The project tasks include:  Phase 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Task 1: Review of the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI)</li><li>• Task 2: Steering Committee Meetings</li><li>• Task 3: Open Space Draft Plan and Map</li></ul>	N/A

<p><b>Project Overview (cont'd)</b></p>	<p>Phase 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task 1: Public Outreach &amp; City Staff Coordination</li> <li>• Task 2: Public Outreach</li> <li>• Task 3: Final Plan &amp; Map</li> <li>• Task 4: Public Outreach and City Staff Coordination</li> </ul> <p>The consultant team will review the Final NRI mapping and data. A series of Conservation Values maps will be produced.</p> <p>The Open Space Steering Committee meetings will be conducted monthly. The consultant team will meet with the Steering Committee at key milestones throughout the project.</p> <p>Monthly coordination calls with the City will be conducted throughout the project.</p> <p>The Open Space Draft Plan will establish a vision for a City-wide network for open spaces and identify specific resource protection. The plan will define a set of conservation goals and strategies. A Conservation Analysis Tool will be developed to assist with this project. The tool is a GIS-based model which objectively identifies priority open space using data from the NRI.</p> <p>The Draft Open Space Plan and Map will be presented at a future City Council meeting.</p> <p>The Draft Open Space Plan and Conservation Values mapping will be presented to the public at an in-person or web-based interactive workshop. The outreach effort will gather community input on their priorities for open space.</p> <p>The Final Open Space Plan will incorporate Steering Committee and Public input. The Plan will identify strategies and tools for conservation, as well as funding mechanisms.</p> <p>The Final Open Space Plan and Map will be presented at a future City Council meeting.</p> <p>Jaclyn Hakes gave an overview of the project schedule and milestones throughout the project.</p> <p>Public Engagement during the project will include a community photo survey, public workshop, project</p>	<p>Steering Committee to confirm if a project website will be created.</p>
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<p><b>Project Overview (cont'd)</b></p>	<p>website and social media outreach. The project website will be established to keep the public informed about the project and schedule.</p> <p>The Steering Committee discussed the option of having a separate project website, or one that is integrated within the city website.</p> <p>Members of the Steering Committee will serve as Ambassadors for the project, hosting pop up tables at community events, while maintaining social distance.</p> <p>The Steering Committee discussed possible venues for pop up tables or informational flyers including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outside administration building at Saratoga Spa Park</li> <li>• Farmer's Market</li> <li>• Bog Meadow Trailhead</li> </ul> <p>Coordination with Saratoga PLAN and the Great Outdoors Project through the Saratoga Springs City School district were suggested to assist with public outreach.</p> <p>The Steering Committee discussed the option of an online community survey to gather feedback.</p>	
<p><b>Mini Visioning Session</b></p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) led a mini visioning discussion with prompt questions for the Steering Committee.</p> <p><b>1. What challenges do you see for open space in the City of Saratoga Springs (now and in the future)?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding, acquisition of new property, and long-term maintenance are critical challenges.</li> <li>• Development pressure, usership from outside the city limits, and pressure on existing spaces.</li> <li>• Government fiscal challenges, capital development costs.</li> <li>• Bonds limited to capital improvements and do not include maintenance costs</li> <li>• Additional open space opportunities within city are limited, consider pocket developing parks</li> <li>• Focus on providing equal access to open space across City</li> </ul> <p><b>2. What opportunities do you envision now and in the future?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on partnerships for maintenance of spaces</li> </ul>	<p>N/A</p>

<p><b>Mini Visioning Session (cont'd)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timing of COVID and increased interest in the outdoors is an opportunity</li> <li>• Opportunity to build infrastructure for long-term stewardships</li> </ul> <p>Discussion of the overlap between the Recreation Master Plan and the Open Space Plan. The Open Space Plan will identify areas for both active and passive recreation.</p> <p>The Recreation Master Plan identified potential bicycle and recreation linkages to existing spaces.</p> <p><b>3. Identify your priorities for open space within the City of Saratoga Springs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the time limitations, this question will be considered by the Steering Committee members after the meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>Steering Committee to share responses to mini visioning with the consultant team.</p> <p>Steering Committee members to share the mini visioning questions with their representative groups and agencies to gather input</p>
<p><b>Discussion of Data Collection</b></p>	<p>Jaclyn Hakes (MJ) led a discussion of the data collection needs and existing datasets.</p> <p>Mapping will utilize existing datasets from the Natural Resource Inventory.</p> <p>The consultant team will work with the City to obtain data.</p>	<p>City to assist MJ to obtain Final NRI data.</p>
<p><b>Next Steps</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Steering Committee to review existing plans</li> <li>- Steering Committee to provide Mini-vision input</li> <li>- Steering Committee Meeting #2 TBD</li> <li>- MJ to coordinate with the City in the creation of a project website.</li> <li>- MJ to obtain Final NRI data</li> <li>- MJ to review Natural Resource Inventory and existing plans</li> <li>- MJ to propose Conservation Values mapping topics</li> <li>- MJ to develop Draft Conservation Criteria.</li> </ul>	<p>The next Steering Committee meeting is TBD</p>

This meeting summary conveys our understanding of the items discussed and agreements reached at this meeting. Please forward any additions, corrections and/or questions to my attention.

Submitted by:

Sarah Starke, MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, PC

cc: Consultant Team, Steering Committee, City Planning & Zoning Department, Project File

## Attendance

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Christina Carton	City of Saratoga Springs, Administrator of Parks, Open Space, Historic Preservation & Sustainability
Tom Denny	Chair, Open Space Advisory Committee
Alane Ball Chinian	Regional Director, Saratoga-Capital District Region, NY State Office of Parks, Rec & Historic Preservation
Cheryl Smith	City of Saratoga Springs, Recreation Commission
Jennifer Hunt Dempsey	Open Space Advisory Committee; Wilton Wildlife Preserve
Mike Horn	Conservation Director, Saratoga PLAN
Dr. Mike Patton	Superintendent, Saratoga Springs City School District
Stephen Samuell	Open Space Advisory Committee
Jaclyn Hakes	MJ Engineering
Sarah Starke	MJ Engineering