

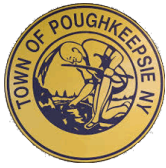


TOWN OF POUGHKEEPSIE

Natural Resources Inventory & Open Space Plan

Public Engagement Plan

March 2021



TOWN OF POUGHKEEPSIE

Natural Resources Inventory and Open Space Plan

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INTRODUCTION

Background

The Town of Poughkeepsie is undertaking an effort to develop a Town-wide Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) and Open Space Plan. The NRI will identify key environmental and open space resources within the Town. This includes water resources, wildlife habitats, flood zones, agricultural lands and more. The Open Space Plan will establish a vision for a Town-wide network of open spaces. The plan will create a roadmap to ensure an appropriate balance of open space and natural resources as the Town grows. The plan will define conservation goals and strategies as well as specific resource protection within the Town.

The planning process is being guided by an Open Space Committee which includes members of the Town Planning Department, Town Board and Conservation Advisory Commission (CAC). The planning process will include a robust public engagement component to gather input from residents, visitors, business owners, property owners, and other stakeholders in the community.

Project Team

MJ Engineering and Land Surveying, P.C. (MJ) has been selected to work with the Town and Open Space Steering Committee to facilitate the planning process. Shumaker Engineering and Land Surveying will be assisting MJ with this effort.

Public Engagement Plan and Process

A Public Engagement Plan for the project will be established which provides an opportunity to gather information from members of the public and stakeholders about the study. Input received is critical to making informed decisions that are supported by the Town residents and parks and recreation users.

This plan has been developed to establish a communication channel between the public, the Town, applicable regulatory agencies, and the Project Team throughout the duration of the study. This plan aims to achieve this communication by sharing information with the public regarding the planning process, and by providing a variety of occasions for the public to provide input.



Scope of Work

This effort involves the following work tasks:

- Task 1: Project Coordination
- Task 2: Natural Resources Inventory
- Task 3: Open Space Plan
- Task 4: Public Engagement

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The Public Engagement Plan for the project includes a variety of outreach and engagement activities designed to inform the public and gather input. An emphasis will be made to reach traditionally under-engaged groups. The following community participation activities are included in this effort:

- Project Website / Social Media Outreach
- Online Open Space Survey
- Key Stakeholder Group Meetings
- Public Workshops (3)

A preliminary schedule for each of these outreach activities is outlined below.

Outreach Activity	Date
Project Website / Social Media Outreach	Ongoing
Online Open Space Survey	Spring 2021
Key Stakeholder Group Meetings	Spring 2021
Public Workshops (3)	March 31 st 2021, Summer 2021, Fall 2021

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

A communications strategy has been established to keep the public informed about the process and to notify the public of opportunities to participate. The intent is to reach all interested stakeholders using a variety of outreach methods. To meet this objective, the project team has developed a Publicity Distribution Table. The table identifies key publicity methods including print media, social media, cable, radio, as well as local community organizations. The table identifies the contacts for each method as well as the timeframe for notification.



Digital media is a preferred method of sharing and gathering information by many that may not have the ability or time to attend public workshops. Digital outreach includes the use of a website and digital media to share project information with the public and notify the public of opportunities to participate.

Website

MJ will develop and manage a project website throughout the duration of the project. The website will include project updates, materials, as well as a feedback form to keep the public engaged and informed. A link to the project website will be placed on the Town's website (www.townofpoughkeepsie.com/). The project website and social media venues will be used to provide updates throughout the process and share materials. The website will also include a comments form to allow the public to share their thoughts throughout the project. This is just one of several ways of gathering community input throughout the process. The intent is to reach all interested stakeholders using a variety of outreach methods. Digital media is a preferred method of sharing and gathering information by many. Materials available on the website may include, but not be limited to the following:

- Upcoming Engagement Opportunities
- Surveys
- Meeting materials

The website is located at the following link:

<http://www.townofpoughkeepsieopenspace.com/>

Social Media

The Town will utilize its social media outlets, such as Twitter and Facebook, to advertise public engagement activities.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A variety of methods will be utilized to inform the public about the process and gather input.

Opportunities for public participation include:

- Online Open Space Survey
- Key Stakeholder Group Meetings
- Public Workshops (3)



Public Workshop #1

Date: Wednesday, March 31st 2021 at 7:00 PM Via Zoom

Purpose: The purpose of the first Public Workshop will be to introduce the project to the public and present the Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) component of the project and share draft mapping. The workshop will include a brief presentation and an overview of the purpose, scope, and schedule of the project. The public will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the Natural Resources Inventory mapping and natural resources.

Platform: The public workshop will be web-based and comply with the required safety protocols.

Publicity:

- Posting of materials as laid out in the Publicity Distribution Table including:
 - Press release to local media outlets including print media, cable, and radio
 - Posting of flyers to social media outlets, local community organization
 - Posting to Town and project website
 - Flyer distributed to Town

Online Open Space Survey

Date: Spring 2021.

Purpose: The purpose of the Online Open Space Survey is to gather feedback on the community's vision and goals for Open Space in the Town of Poughkeepsie. It is anticipated this survey would be opened for public input at Public Workshop #2.

Platform: The electronic survey will be developed through SurveyMonkey and will be shared on the project website and the Town of Poughkeepsie website. In addition, hard copy survey cards will be available at key locations throughout the Town to raise awareness of the survey. Hardcopies of the survey may also be made available if necessary.

Publicity:

- Posting to project website
- Posting to Town website
- Flyer for Town and Committee to distribute and post to social media
- Survey Cards available at key locations throughout the Town.



Key Stakeholder Group Meetings

Date: Spring 2021.

Purpose: The Project Team will organize meetings (virtual or in person as appropriate) and or telephone interviews with key stakeholders and partners. To the extent possible, stakeholder meetings will be coordinated with other scheduled public engagement. After these meetings and interviews are conducted, findings will be summarized, reviewed, and discussed with the Steering Committee. These conversations will be helpful in understanding open space needs, opportunities and vision.

Platform: (TBD). Stakeholder Group Meetings may be in-person or web-based depending on the required safety protocols.

Publicity:

- Invitations will be made to those whose experience with a specific issue warrants a targeted discussion. Invitees will be determined in consultation with the Open Space Steering Committee and may include Town Staff, landowners, school districts, citizen groups, etc.

Public Workshop #2

Date: Summer 2021

Purpose: The purpose of the second Public Workshop will be to gather input on the community's vision and goals for Open Space in the Town of Poughkeepsie. The public will have the opportunity to provide feedback on series of Community Values maps. The workshop will include a brief presentation and an interactive community discussion. The session will also serve as a forum for participants to provide information about their open space needs and identify opportunities and constraints to further inform the Open Space Plan. This input will help to inform the vision, goals and strategies for the Open Space Plan.

Platform: (TBD). The public workshop may be in-person or web-based depending on the required safety protocols at the time.

Publicity:

- Posting of materials as laid out the in the Publicity Distribution Table including:
 - Press release to local media outlets including print media, cable, and radio
 - Posting of flyers to social media outlets, local community organization
 - Posting to Town and project website
 - Flyer distributed to Town



Public Workshop #3

Date: Fall 2021

Purpose: The final public workshop will present the Draft Open Space Plan and mapping. The workshop will include a presentation and an overview of the final vision, goals and strategies for the plan. The public will have an opportunity to provide comments on the plan.

Platform: (TBD). The public workshop may be in-person or web-based depending on the required safety protocols.

Publicity:

- Posting of materials as laid out the in the Publicity Distribution Table including:
 - Press release to local media outlets including print media, cable, and radio
 - Posting of flyers to social media outlets, local community organization
 - Posting to Town and project website
 - Flyer distributed to Town