

TOWN OF MIDDLEFIELD
MINUTES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE
November 21, 2023

PRESENT: David Karl, Town Supervisor, Andy Baugnet, Kelly Branigan Middlefield Town Board (via zoom), Jennifer Pindar Middlefield Town Board, Bill Gibson, Peg Leon Middlefield Town Board, Neal Newman Middlefield Zoning Enforcement Officer.

Meeting called to order 6:06 pm.

Motion to approve minutes by P. Leon, 2nd D. Karl. All in favor.

7 members of the public attended this meeting on the topic of Farmland and Open Space Preservation. The interest in the topic was selected as a result of the community survey that was mailed to Middlefield land owners. 51.5 % of people who answered the survey feel Open Space and Environmental Preservation is a priority for the Comprehensive Plan to focus on.

The Vision and Values of the Otsego Land Trust were introduced by May Leinhart. She began by defining conservation easements and answered further questions about land protection.

A Conservation Easement is:

It is a legal agreement filed with the deed of your property that ensures those conservation values are always protected no matter who owns the property in the future.

If you, as a property owner, want to protect your land with a conservation easement, Otsego Land Trust (OLT) works with you to develop the easement to determine what may be important to protect or conserve.

Otsego Land Trust helps ensure your property is protected under the terms of your easement into the future.

Other topics addressed by the group were as follows:

Attendees spoke of the importance of collaboration between civic representatives and the community, the importance of how land preservation is linked with quality of life, water quality, clean air, forest productivity, carbon sequestration, and food production among other points. People generally felt that imposing conditions on development is not often well received through zoning laws but needed.

Other related discussion revolved around public policy regarding land preservation, open space, and balances between development and farmland protection. Questions such as what is open space, how much land is currently actually being farmed, what defines scenic viewsheds.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 pm by D. Karl, 2nd A. Baugnet, all in favor.

The next Comprehensive Plan Committee will be held December 19, at 6:00 PM at Middlefield Town hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Baugnet
Secretary