

Clifton Park Open Space Concept Plan Moves Forward

By Carole Nemore

THE TOWN OF Clifton Park's first ever, comprehensive open space concept plan is moving from draft to finalization. After the townspeople commented favorably in support of its adoption at three public meetings held in late September, David J. Miller, who served as co-chair of the Clifton Park Open Space Committee, was optimistic about the plan's adoption, stating, "a final plan will be put together in November and presented to the Town Board for action in December." If approved by the Town Board, the plan would be implemented beginning January 2003.

Major elements of a successful plan

were identified as the result of a series of extensive public meetings, workshops and a survey sent out last year to the town's 12,000 households. At the top of the list for open space protection is the need to protect the town's drinking water resources. Habitat preservation came in second in importance. The residents fully supported the town's acquisition of wildlife nature preserves and the creation of a new watershed-based natural area that would entail protecting 300 to 600 acres in the next two to five years. Obtaining additional lands near the existing Vischer Ferry Nature and Historic Preserve was also

highlighted. Other major elements of the plan include acquiring smaller nature preserves accessible to all neighborhoods, a farmland protection program that focuses on the most valuable active working farms, partnerships with government programs to obtain more conservation easements assistance, expansion of park land and ball fields, gaining access to river-based recreation, updating the town's parks and recreation master plan, expanding multi-use trails and pathways especially through neighborhoods, and preserving and promoting scenic roads and cultural and historic resources through a system of interpretive signs.

Over the long-term, the plan identified the need to develop an open space administration to seek grants, to strengthen public and private partnerships, and to make a local financial commitment. In the short-term, the plan suggests setting aside money from the town's annual budget, establishing an open space capital reserve fund, borrowing through municipal bonds and/or creating an open space district.

"[Many] people come to Clifton Park for a good quality of life because here they feel a sense of community..." added Miller. As change starts to occur, people want to make sure future changes are done in a positive way."

Development Team Takes Flight

By Shirley Hartman

AS PART OF A NATIONAL overhaul of Audubon's development operations, Audubon New York has expanded its own development operation and is announcing the addition of four new staff members dedicated to enhancing our service to donors.

Last year, Jan Hesbon joined the development team as a Planned Giving Officer working in Connecticut and New York. This summer, Donna Gaetano transferred to the development department as its executive assistant. In addition, Kate Qualters joined the team as the development officer, Kris Hinesley came aboard as the senior major gifts officer, and Debra Balliet joined Audubon New York as its capital campaigns director.

The new staff is charged with creating greater personal interaction with Audubon donors. For many years, Audubon New York has relied on direct mail as its primary outreach to donors. For the first time, the development department will be providing personal outreach by literally assigning donors to an individual




PHOTOGRAPH BY L. ROY

(L to R) Deb Balliet, Kate Qualters, and Donna Gaetano. (Missing Kris Hinesley and Jan Hesbon)

staff member who will manage their support from request to acknowledgement; and will ensure that the donor fully understands their use of funds and that this use is consistent with their philanthropic desire.

Future expansion is planned with the addition of a major gifts officer for New York City and a major gifts officer for Long Island.



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Return to: Jan Hesbon, Planned Giving Officer, Audubon New York
200 Trillium Lane, Albany, NY 12203 (518) 869-9731 or jhesbon@audubon.org.

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