

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 10, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Lorin Nauman (present by Zoom) called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. Other members present were Ron Hoover (present by Zoom), Jim Smith (present by Zoom), Patti Hartle (present by Zoom) and Joanne Fisher (present by Zoom/phone). Staff present Amy Smith, OSPB Administrator (present by Zoom), and Rebekah Laird, Recording Secretary (present by Zoom). No audience was present.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**

There were no citizen's comments.

**4. MINUTES**

- ***MOTION: Ms. Hartle moved to approve the meeting minutes of February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 as submitted; Ms. Fisher seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion carried.***

**5. PERMANENT EASEMENT RATING SYSTEM CRITERIA**

Mr. Nauman suggested the Board review each item of rating system to get a working final draft.

1.	<b>A Project Description has been submitted:</b>	<b>1</b>
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The OSPB all agreed to remove the above criteria from the rating system.

2.	<b>The Parcel to be Acquired Contributes to a Continuous Corridor</b>	**
a.	The parcel links two or more permanently preserved areas <u>OR Provides or helps to provide a wildlife corridor from the Game lands to Bald Eagle Ridge.</u>	<b>15</b>
b.	The parcel adjoins another parcel of land preserved in the OSPP of Halfmoon Township or other preservation program acceptable to the OSPB:	<b>10</b>

c.	The parcel adjoins the State Game Lands and or State Forest Lands:	<b>10</b>
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2a. Mr. Smith commented that the Bald Eagle Ridge is 100% privately owned and does not agree that this addition language should be applied. Following a brief discussion, the OSPB all came to agreement that the above highlighted portion stating, "OR provides or helps to provide a wildlife corridor from the Game lands to Bald Eagle Ridge" be removed to simply state that it links two permanently preserved areas.

<b>3.</b>	<b>Road Frontage</b>	<b>**</b>
a.	Road frontage 2,000' +	<b>10</b>
b.	Road frontage 500' to less than 2,000'	<b>7</b>
c.	Road frontage 50' to less than 500'	<b>4</b>

The OSPB all agreed to retain the above criteria as presented in the rating system.

<b>4.</b>	<b>Property Size</b>	
d.	Property Size 300 acres +	<b>20</b>
e.	Property Size 175 to less than 300 acres	<b>15</b>
f.	Property Size 100 to less than 175 acres	<b>11</b>
g.	Property Size 50 to less than 100 acres	<b>7</b>
h.	Property Size 11 to less than 50 acres	<b>4</b>

Following a brief discussion on the negative and positive aspects of looking at property size (i.e., price tag for a bigger property, preserving multiple smaller properties) the OSPB agreed that the points for property size should remain as part of the rating system and would be re-visited for possible removal after trying the system on a selection of properties interested in permanent easement.

<b>5.</b>	<b>Promotion of Partnerships</b>	<b>**</b>
a.	Funds are being provided by the Township <u>only</u> :	<b>0</b>
b.	Funds are being provided by a corporation, state, or other organization:	<b>5</b>

The OSPB all agreed with no discussion to remove the above criteria from the rating system due to being covered in another section.

<b>6.</b>	<b>Requested Township Contribution</b>	<b>**</b>
a.	Halfmoon Township is contributing 1% to less than 25% of the appraised value:	<b>25</b>
b.	Halfmoon Township is contributing 25% to less than 50% of the appraised value:	<b>20</b>
c.	Halfmoon Township is contributing 50% to less than 75% of the appraised value:	<b>10</b>
	Halfmoon Township is contributing 75% to 95% of the appraised value:	<b>5</b>
d.	Halfmoon Township is contributing 95% + of the appraised value:	<b>0</b>

The OSPB all agreed with no discussion to retain the above criteria as presented in the rating system.

<b>7.</b>	<b>Provides public access</b> for passive enjoyment, sport, recreation or hunting. Preserves existing or planned conservations, park or recreation sites.	<b>10</b>
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Mr. Nauman questioned if there was any clarification from Township Solicitor on potential legal ramifications that might arise. Ms. Smith stated she did not have the direct response but could check. Mr. Hoover stated that no matter the response from the solicitor he felt that there would be legal ramifications associated with this criteria for both the landowner and the township should something happen. The OSPB all agreed following this discussion that it best to remove this criteria from the land rating system.

<b>8.</b>	<b>Promotes agriculture</b> by preserving prime farmland	<b>**</b>
a.	175 or more acres of prime ag land	<b>15</b>
b.	100 to less than 175 acres of prime ag land	<b>11</b>
c.	50 to less than 100 acres of prime ag land	<b>7</b>
d.	50 to less than 11 acres of prime ag land	<b>4</b>

Mr. Nauman questioned if the ag land acreage should be revised to match property size acreage. Mr. Hoover replied that it would be highly unlikely that if a property at 300 acres came in it would all be prime ag land and the highest rating is covered with “or more.” Mr. Nauman suggested adding an addition property size value, so the lowest property size has scoring consideration. The OSPB agreed to keep the above criteria with the addition of “50 to less than 11 acres of prime ag land” with four points for the scoring value.

9.	<b>Helps ensures through its preservation that other lands remain open</b> (e.g., hinders road or other utility access to nearby lands) or otherwise helps manage Halfmoon Township’s growth.	15
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Mr. Nauman stated he felt this criteria almost sounds like it has a negative effect that should not be done through open space but through zoning. Mr. Smith stated that he felt the criteria gives the appearance that it is promoting the hinderance of future township growth. Mr. Nauman stated that while this might happen coincidentally while preserving properties it should not be considered as criteria for awarded points. Following a brief discussion, the OSPB agreed to remove the above criteria from the rating system.

10.	<b>Provides scenic viewshed and aesthetic features</b> for the community from public rights-of-way including geologic, topographic and historic features.	**
a.	Provides multiple viewshed features or features of aesthetic value to the public	10
b.	Provides some viewshed features but none of outstanding aesthetic value to the public.	5
c.	Provides little or no unique viewshed features or aesthetic value to the public.	0

Mr. Smith commented that this criteria is completely opinion based with no true way to quantify it since it is solely matter of opinion. Mr. Smith gave example using the wildlife corridor stating that he thinks it looks like a field of weeds and not what he would want to see but others like it and think it looks beautiful. Mr. Smith further stated that there was not much in the way of historic landmarks or features in the township and to assign a value to any historic features would also be difficult to quantify. Mr. Nauman stated that he agreed with Mr. Smith and suggested that this criteria be taken out. The OSPB agreed that due to the inability to quantify the above criteria that it be removed from the rating system.

<b>11.</b>	<b>Helps to protect animal and plant habitat</b> – preserves unique features that support wildlife or are of particular botanic interest including wetlands, streams, ponds or other biodiverse habitats.	<b>10</b>
a.	Provides multiple unique habitat features or feature(s) of particular importance to the preservation of native flora and/or fauna	<b>12</b>
b.	Provides some habitat features of importance to the preservation of native flora and/or fauna.	<b>7</b>
c.	Provides few if any habitat features that will have an impact the preservation of native flora and fauna	<b>0</b>

Mr. Smith stated that while these criteria could hold some value, he and members of the board are not botanists and would have difficulty in assigning a scaled value without that knowledge. Mr. Nauman asked if they could put something specific there that might help. Mr. Smith stated that perhaps they could just put simply one score that could be awarded if the property had one of the listed features rather than try to determine a subjective scaled score. Following this brief discussion, the OSPB agreed to strike the scaled portion of the scoring from the above criteria and put in a score of 10 points to be awarded if the property would contain one or more of the listed features.

<b>12.</b>	<b>Helps to protect water resources and watershed areas,</b> including natural covers which help prevent floods and soil erosion thereby protecting water quality and replenishing surface water and groundwater supplies.	<b>15</b>
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Mr. Smith stated that the entire valley is a watershed so any property that would apply would automatically get these 15 points so these points would not help in ranking properties. Following a brief discussion on whether there would be a way to make more specific criteria for the rating the OSPB agreed to remove the above criteria from the rating system.

<b>13.</b>	<b>Distributes open space throughout the Township</b> – Provides open space in an area in the Township that does not otherwise have a large amount of preserved open space.	<b>5</b>
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The OSPB agreed with no discussion to retain the above criteria as presented as part of the rating system.

14.	<b>Preserve open space between communities</b> – Promotes sound and efficient land development by preserving open space buffers between communities or between communities and commercial structures.	15
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The OSPB agreed with no discussion to retain the above criteria as presented as part of the rating system.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Nauman moved to have staff amend the rating system with discussed changes to be used to begin rating interested properties for permanent easement for the next meeting with the possibility for further review; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion carried.***

#### 6. 2021 WORKPLAN

Mr. Nauman reviewed the objectives for this year for OSPB to finish finalizing the rating system (now finished for trial), to complete ratings on interested properties for ranking and to generate possible budgets for acquisition of permanent easement.

#### 7. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

#### 8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:27pm.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Hartle moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:27pm; Mr. Hoover seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion carried.***

Respectfully submitted,



Rebekah Laird,  
OSPB Recording Secretary