

WLC Statement in Response to 5/10/11 Town Board Meeting

The draft Stewardship Plan submitted to WLC on April 29th, 2011 and posted for public comment by the Town Board on April 30th, is thoughtful and substantial. But we need to again draw attention to the language in the Stewardship Plan Amendment:

“...Grantor shall provide notice to Grantee of all activities in relation to the preparation, review, revision and implementation of the Stewardship Plan, and shall additionally provide to Grantee copies of all related documentation, the opportunity to participate in meetings and the opportunity to submit to Grantor comments and suggestions in relation to the Stewardship Plan and its preparation, review and implementation.”

This clearly and legally gives the Woodstock Land Conservancy (WLC) the responsibility to consider the draft in a careful and thoughtful process, using the best resources at our disposal. That is one reason that the amendment set aside 18 months for the process. Because only a week of those 18 months remain, our attorney has proposed to the Town's special counsel that the Town Board and WLC agree to a three-month extension of the deadline, to bring the process back into compliance with the terms of the Amendment. Here's how we anticipate using those three months:

An anonymous donor has granted funds to WLC to allow two highly respected conservation easement consultants to work with us in analyzing and responding to the proposed Stewardship Plan. This will take approximately one month. We will then submit our comments to the Town Board and their counsel, and allow one month for preparation of a revised draft. On receipt of that revised draft we will take several weeks to formulate and deliver any additional comments, and at that point we anticipate that the draft Stewardship Plan will be ready for adoption.

It was enlightening to hear Mr. Barshov discuss the context in which he researched and wrote the draft Stewardship Plan and to hear the thoughtful and deeply-felt comments of the public, especially those of the Ad Hoc Group, whose work contributed so much to this draft Plan and whose vision for the Plan and the process is inspiring. We at WLC also look forward to contributing carefully and constructively to this process.