

Open Space Committee

Town of Bedford

Presentation to Town Board

October 16, 2012

Members:

George Bianco, Chair
Sam Pryor, Former Chair
Tom Cohn
Tina Foster
Rosemary Lee
Diane Lewis- 2012
Glenn Ticehurst

Open Space Goals

- Maintain and enhance rural character
- Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive areas
- Protect historically important site areas
- Protect large parcels with high development potential
- Viewshed protection

Benefit to Bedford Community

- Croton watershed land, woodlands, meadows, bird habitats, hardwood forests, trails, and view sheds protected
- 5 parcels, 71 acres protected, 3 hamlets
- Total value of assets \$4,235,000; Public funds of \$3.565m spent; \$.503m private donations; \$.167m NYC DEP
- 6th parcel, 20 acres pending in December 2012

Open Space Tax Levy

- 3% tax levy part of General Fund and Highway Fund passed by Town vote in 2000
 - Collection of \$499,857 per year in 2011
- Fund enables capacity to bond for higher amounts-fund covers debt service
- Current balance in fund end 2011- \$2.2m
- Current debt service - \$1m
- Total spent on acquisitions \$3.565m

Land Protected Since 2000

- 2000 Tom Burke Preserve
- 2005 Zema's Farm
- 2005 Leatherman's Ridge
- 2006 Vernon Hills
- 2010 Ridge Road
- 2012 Twin Lakes (pending)

2002 Tom Burke Preserve

- 7.5 acres preserved with public access
- Community park dedicated to honor of Bedford resident, victim of 9-11
- Total purchase price of \$300,000 all raised privately
- Protected meadowland, bird habitat, walking trails
- Important Bedford viewshed

2005- Zema's Farm

- 9.5 acres, Katonah
- Significant addition (21%) to existing 46 acre Katonah Memorial Park
- Expansion of protected area helps prevent fragmentation of habitats
- Total purchase price \$800k, all paid through Open Space funds

2005-Leatherman's Ridge

- 34 acres Bedford Hills
- Protection of historic Leatherman's cave, important Bedford viewshed
- Preservation of hardwood forest, Croton watershed land, passive recreation for trails
- Cost \$1.325m; Open Space fund paid \$1.275m; \$50k raised from private citizens

2006- Vernon Hills

- 3.3 acres; Bedford Village
- Adjacent to 26 acre Bedford Memorial Park;13% addition to existing park
- Total cost \$1.015m; paid by Open Space Fund

2010 -Ridge Road

- 17 acres in Katonah
- Protects Croton watershed land; woodlands
- Total cost \$660k; open space funds \$340k;\$153k private residents; \$167k NYC DEP funds
- Open space funds for 52% of project; used to leverage additional funds

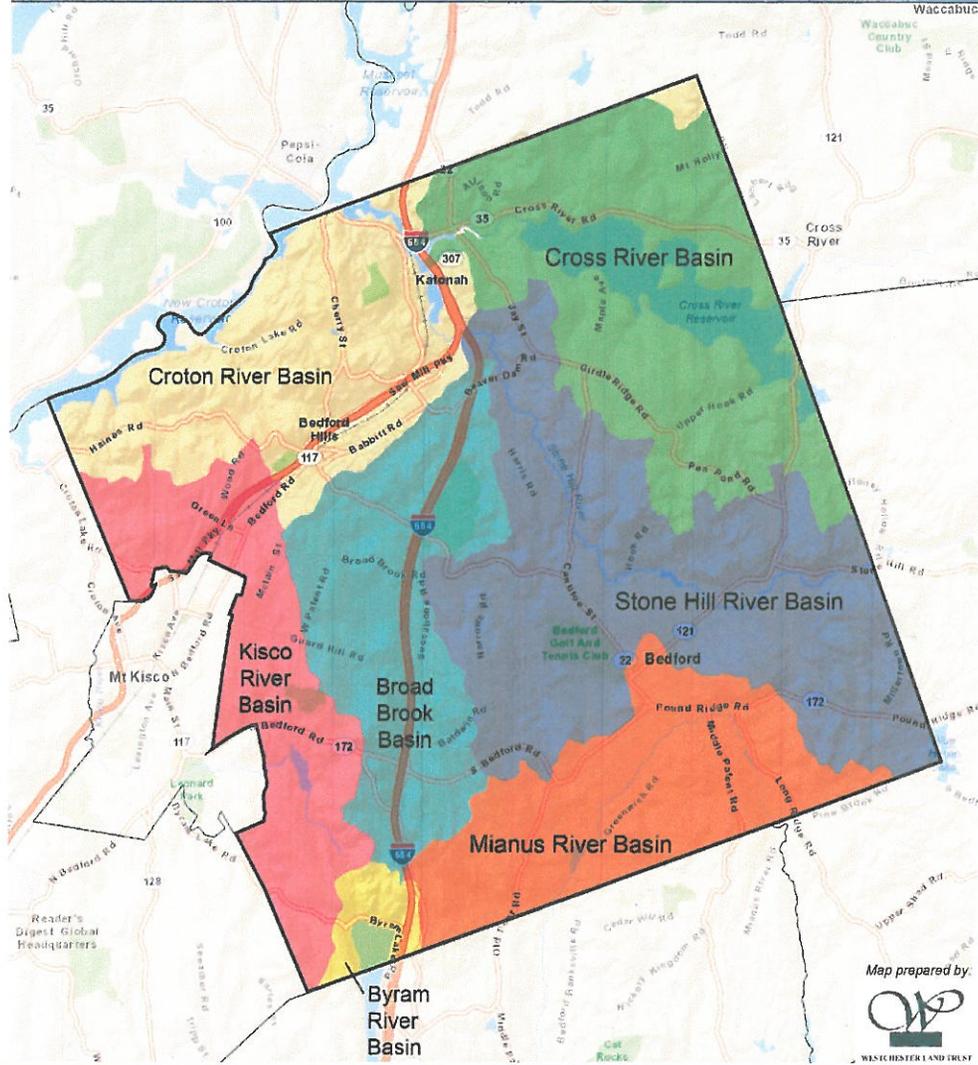
2012- Twin Lakes

- Pending transaction for end 2012
- \$200k dedicated from Open Space fund for total project cost of \$4.25m; Open Space funds used to leverage other funds
- Protects important watershed and Mianus River Gorge water quality

Importance of Open Space Preservation for Bedford

- Water quality-4 aquifers in Bedford
- Watershed protection through filtration of runoff
- Forest and canopy protection for habitat security
- Climate protection from pervious surface cover
- Protection of Bedford's unique historic character
- Preserve working farms for locally grown food
- Local community preserves for recreation
- Viewshed protection

TOWN OF BEDFORD WATERSHEDS



Open Space for Bedford

- Continue to protect Bedford's history as a community committed to open space, trails, and riding paths
- Encourage partnerships with Conservation Board, Bedford 2020, and Westchester Land Trust to help identify properties that are under threat of development
- Hold an annual independent audit of how funds are spent

**PROPOSAL NUMBER ONE,
TOWN PROPOSITION NUMBER ONE**

SHALL the local law adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Bedford on July 17, 2012, to establish a special tax levy in the amount of 1% of the General Fund and Highway Fund for a period of five (5) years, which revenues will be placed in a separate reserve fund to be known as “Open Spaces and Areas, Park and Water Protection Debt Reserve Fund”, which fund will be used for payment of Town indebtedness issued to purchase, improve and preserve open space and wildlife habitat, to provide public access for hiking, biking and outdoor recreation to the lands that are purchased, and to protect drinking water sources and the quality of surface and ground waters of the Town, with an annual public audit of expenditures, be approved?

YES NO