

OTSEGO LAKE ASSOCIATION
Informational Meeting, August 26, 2006

The meeting was called to order by OLA President, Paul Lord at Lakefront Park in Cooperstown. Paul introduced our featured speaker, Scott Fickbohm who is the newly appointed District Manager of the Otsego Co. Soil and Water Conservation District. Paul cited Scott's leadership in Soil and Water's work on wetland restoration and keeping soils out of lakes.

Scott began by relating his experience, education, and interest in this area and went on to explain Soil and Water's mission to conserve the resources of Otsego Co. He informed us that Soil and Water has a Board of Directors which hires the Director and also advises regarding organizational direction. In addition to Scott, Soil and Water has two other full-time employees.

Scott discussed how Soil and Water is the institutional interface with county and state government. He also enumerated its involvement in the following areas :

- the agricultural management program - interfacing with the agricultural community to identify problems and connect with resources (serving as liaison between residents and agencies)

- hydro seeding -spraying grass seed emulsions on exposed top soil to prevent erosion

- annual tree sale

- development - working with individual planning boards to work on how development is done

Scott concluded his remarks by noting that OLA had been a very valuable partner for Soil and Water and stressed that OLA and other similar organizations have made it easier to help. He indicated that it was his hope that in the future that there would be even more ways for partnership since it was his belief that people can do more when they come together.

A question and answer session followed. There were questions about:

- hydro seeding private property.-currently working with the county in seeding road ditches. (OCCA has donated supplies within the watershed.) Because of the recent flooding, FEMA will fund the seeding of the entire county, but there is a fee for private individuals.

- cooperation with the planning board - Scott is trying to interact more with that body.

- possible utilization of new OLA funded plume pictures - more information about sources may be available - landowners will be encouraged to voluntarily work with Soil and Water and developers will be helped to implement DEC requirements

- possibility of literally walking stream banks - Scott thought this was a great idea and there was a discussion of volunteer or intern opportunities/ collaboration

monitoring of lake issues - Soil and Water not a permit or ticketing agency, (eg. State monitors boating) but they could be source for connection or compromise sediment ponds- solution but needs commitment to maintain

Japanese Bamboo removal - falls under the mission of the Water Quality Commission, Scott has not seen any funding by state, Soil and Water willing to provide manpower but need a source of funding

Paul Lord thanked Scott for his excellent presentation and awarded him with an OLA tee shirt and Honey from Paul's Otsego Co. bees. (Scott may be reached at (607) 547-8337 ext. 110 or Email: scott.fickbohm@ny.nacdnet.net)

BUSINESS

Paul informed the membership that the Village Planning Board had the previous day approved our request to fund raise for an addition to the buffer strip planting at Lakefront Park. Paul explained that Suzy Kingsley who represents the Lake and Valley Garden Club with whom OLA is collaborating on this effort, has prepared eleven revisions in response to various concerns and that we still do not have a finalized plan. Paul praised Suzy for her outstanding contribution and noted that OLA Board member, Wayne Bunn, will deal with related engineering concerns. Paul pointed out a photographic display assembled by Carl Good documenting the erosion regularly taking place behind the sea wall. He explained progress has been made in that rip rap has been installed on the north side of the sea wall and silt traps (funded by OLA and installed by the Village) have been placed at the foot of Pioneer St.

Paul introduced Suzy who showed her rendering of the proposed strip. Suzy explained that in addition to low maintenance plantings including grasses and hearty perennials that there would be a handicapped accessible, raised boardwalk and benches. Suzy answered questions about the rendering. The boardwalk material will be made from recyclable material and there will be opportunities to dedicate benches and other features in the garden.

There was a discussion of the need for fundraising for this project since the boardwalk material alone will cost approximately \$8000. There were suggestions about including Rotary in this project, utilizing local contractors or BOCES students. Lake and Valley Garden Club has allocated \$1500 for the project. The OLA Board will meet to discuss increasing our commitment as well.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Mickie Richtsmeier