
PROTECT ORANGE COUNTY'S OPEN SPACES, FARMS AND DRINKING WATER

Learn how you can help to protect open space!

Please join us for a free webinar discussing the benefits of:



Preserving open space and farm lands



Maintaining healthy drinking water sources



Protecting historic and cultural sites throughout Orange County



How you and elected officials can save these life sustaining parcels from overdevelopment.

Thursday, October 1st 7pm - 8:30pm

This is a free event, but you must register to KMartinez@OrangeCountyGov.com

Direct questions to Kate Schmidt at 845-615-3858 or KSchmidt@OrangeCountyGov.com

What is the Community Preservation Act?

The Community Preservation Act (Act) of 2007 was rooted in the enormous success the Town of Warwick had with their conservation efforts to protect agricultural land and open spaces from overdevelopment. The 2020 NYS legislative Bill, A7699B-S6224B, provides Towns and Cities an opportunity to opt into a program via a town-wide referendum to create a real estate transfer tax that would allow the municipality to purchase open spaces that are vulnerable to overdevelopment.



Town of Warwick has preserved more than 4,000 acres through its a Community Preservation Fund Program.

How will the community benefit?

Each town and city determine for themselves what lands they want to preserve. At this time, each town or city interested in preserving open space or farmland, must request approval from the State Legislature. This Bill will eliminate the extra step of lobbying the State and allows all local municipalities within Orange County to determine their own fate with a referendum for their voters to decide. The amount of the real estate transfer tax is determined locally, and lands to be preserved must be inventoried in a municipality's preservation plan. Each community must create a preservation plan to identify the ecological value of its undeveloped parcels. Once this research is completed, individual and blocks of targeted parcels can be prioritized for scheduled preservation.



WE CAN'T TAKE FOR GRANTED THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPES AND VIEWS THAT GRACE OUR PICTURESQUE COUNTY.

Currently the State has granted Westchester, Putnam and Ulster Counties the option for its towns and cities to develop their own plans and impose a real estate transfer tax. In Orange County the Town of Warwick was the first, and to date, the only town to enact a real estate transfer tax to fund land conservation. Through its Community Preservation transfer tax, Warwick raised approximately \$6 million and was able to leverage this fund as a match for numerous county, state and private land preservation grants, in order to protect over 4,000 acres of open space and farmland. The Towns of Chester and Blooming Grove have also completed preservation plans with targeted land parcels they wish to protect. However, NYS failed to pass an Orange County-wide option and the Governor vetoed the Town of Chester's Senate-approved request.

2020 Update

In 2007 the Orange County legislature passed a resolution supporting The Community Preservation Act however, Orange County was not included in the State legislation, unlike Westchester and Putnam Counties. In 2019, the OC Legislature unanimously passed another resolution supporting the Act but yet again was not included in State law even when Ulster County was added. This Bill passed the NYS Assembly and was referred to the NYS Senate floor where it later died. In February 2020, a new senate bill was introduced arguing each municipality should be able to determine for itself how best to protect these invaluable resources through voter referendum. No action has been taken on this bill.

