

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-050

TOWN BOARD  
TOWN OF BETHLEHEM  
RESOLUTION

**Open Space Plan: Conservation Criteria Implementation**

WHEREAS, open space conservation planning has been a topic of discussion in Bethlehem for over a decade, and has been a focus of numerous committees, meetings, focus groups and written reports; and,

WHEREAS, a consistent recommendation found in these efforts, from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan to the 2014 Open Space Program Resolution, has been the development of conservation criteria to evaluate conservation opportunities when they arise; and,

WHEREAS, the Town of Bethlehem Open Space Plan: Conservation Criteria Implementation, dated December 2017, includes an updated town-wide open space inventory and database, illustrated in four Open Space Conservation Values Maps, conservation criteria and a conservation analysis tool with which to evaluate open space land for its conservation value.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Town Board accepts the Open Space Plan: Conservation Criteria Implementation (December 2017) and directs the implementation of the conservation values maps, conservation criteria, and conservation analysis tool shall occur through ongoing use by the Town Board, Planning Board, Planning Department staff, and the Conservation Easement Review Board. The conservation criteria and analysis tool will prepare and guide the town in responding to landowner-initiated inquiries about conservation opportunities, as well as inform the town's development review and design process; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Conservation Easement Review Board shall utilize the conservation values maps, conservation criteria and conservation analysis tool during their evaluation of conservation easement exemption applications; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Board and Planning Board shall utilize the conservation values maps, conservation criteria and conservation analysis tool to inform the consideration of conservation subdivision and planned development district projects. These design options that include density incentives can help to conserve priority open space areas, while clustering development in less sensitive areas on the development site; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Board shall utilize the conservation values maps, conservation criteria and conservation analysis tool to inform the conservation benefits of the land when purchase of development rights or the purchase of land opportunities arise; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, implementation of the conservation criteria will inform the use of limited financial resources and direct future funds to the conservation of open space land that will have the

most beneficial impact town-wide. Having this open space plan in place will also support town applications for state, regional and federal grant funding for conservation implementation; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Conservation Easement Review Board shall serve as the advisory body to the Town Board for all open space planning efforts.

On a motion by Councilwoman Becker, seconded by Councilman VanLuven, and by a vote of 5 for, 0 against and 0 absent, this RESOLUTION was adopted on December 13, 2017.