

PUBLIC HEARING ON FIREARMS IN THE VISCHER FERRY NATURE PRESERVE

On September 5, 2023, at the 7:00 P.M. Town Board meeting, the Board will consider a modest proposal to change the way in which restrictions on firearms are defined in the Vischer Ferry Preserve. The Town assumed Stewardship over the Preserve in 1977 through a Use and Occupancy permit issued by the NYS Canals Corporation and the use of all firearms has been prohibited through standard regulations.

To remove any confusion on how, when and where alleged violations of the existing code may have occurred, the proposal before the Board is to change the wording of the Town Code to prohibit the possession or transportation of firearms within the Nature Preserve. Therefore, the town is considering banning the carrying of rifles and shotguns, as well as bows, inside the preserve, it's parking access areas and hiking trails. However, the use of such firearms or bows was already prohibited under the existing regulation.

The Board is aware that certain exceptions will need to be carved out for persons licensed to carry concealed weapons under NYS Penal Law Section 400.00 and analogous federal statutes, and for law enforcement and retired law enforcement personnel as detailed in Penal law 265.01 E.

The proposed change to the Town Code, does not eliminate or expand opportunities for hunting in the Preserve. Public hearings on proposed legislative actions are public discussions solely focused on the subject matter within the proposed changes to the Town Code.