

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes

October 17, 1991

PRESENT

R. Klattenberg, Chair
M. Giamei
A. Siniscalchi
E. Patton
J. Brawerman
J. Chace
K. Coley
D. Goff
C. Harris

ABSENT

E. KeIsey
L. Tundermann
G. Russo
C. Peterson

ALSO PRESENT

C. Wilcox, Staff
A. Street, GMPT

Chairman R. Klattenberg called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. in Room B-20 of the Municipal Building. He announced that P. Bogue had resigned from the Commission and that all alternates were seated for the meeting which is the rescheduled regular meeting of the Commission.

Minutes: Minutes of September 12th were passed out for consideration at the next meeting; minutes of August 8th were not available due to the inaudible quality of the tapes; and minutes of August 23rd special meeting were 50% complete.

Officer and Committee Reports

Chairman R. Klattenberg reported that he had been asked to serve on the review panel for the Environmental Manager as the Chairman of the Conversation (sic) Commission. Out of a field of 66 applicants, the field had been narrowed to twelve, all of whom were to be interviewed in the same day. The panel will consist of Tom Morrissey, DEP; John Pagino, Enfield; Larry Kinch, personnel director, and himself.

A. Siniscalchi, vice-chair wished to recognize the members, and especially C. Harris for the awards given at the recent CACIWC Dinner.

Natural Resources Inventory Committee: No report

City Commissions Liaison Committee: No report

Open Space Preservation Committee: A. Siniscalchi invited the Commission and all interested to the Open Space Celebration/Dedication on November 2nd at the Guida Property. There will be speakers, hayrides, refreshments, petting zoo, food, etc. He asked for volunteers to help serve between 10-2. Additionally, Mr. Siniscalchi reported that they had received a number of requests on parcels of land to be considered for open space acquisition. His Committee will need to meet soon and will look at the new parcels in conjunction with the open space mapping. Other items on their agenda will be to work out the language of a "fees in lieu" of open space ordinance and to develop management plans for the open space parcels already in City ownership.

Lamentation Mountain Tri-Town Project:

R. Klattenberg reported that there was a meeting scheduled for the next day at Midstate Regional Planning Agency with the Conservation Commission chairpeople and staff. Another meeting at CFPA was scheduled for October 30th to come up with the project goals.

Upon a motion by K. Coley, seconded by A. Siniscalchi, it was voted unanimously to move agenda item "Public Forum" up to before "Old Business" in order to accomodate Ann Street of the GMPT who had come to address the Commission on the history and prospects of the Cenacle property.

Public Forum

Ms. Street reported that the GMPT had a subcommittee working on schemes which might work for the future of the building. She gave a brief architectural history of the building and grounds, noting that intent of the landscaping was an Olmstead - type park. Col. Wadsworth designed the building himself in 1909 entirely on the metric system. A. Street felt this property to be an area of overlap between the preservation and conservation communities. The Trust has started the process of putting both the building and landscaping on the National Register of Historic Places. Since Col. Wadsworth designed a virtually fireproof building, the damage of the fire is not major and is primarily in the rear; the building is structurally sound. Unfortunately, the Bank, which owns it, does not consider it an asset; and an incentive for its rehab is needed. She described various scenarios and uses considered by the Trust, from residential to open space; but emphasized the need for a use of the building which is both self supporting, and in harmony with the concept of community open space on the grounds. Based on the models of Waverly House and Barney House, she suggested a party/meeting facility for weddings, banquets, public and/or non-profit group meetings, etc. In New Canaan with a staff of only one person, they realize 140% return to the City, and have 3 parties/week at \$1,000 each. (City and community groups are not charged). Parking would be the main problem, but other historic facilities like this use small lots hidden throughout the landscaping. Mercy and Snow Schools may also offer parking at their off-peak times. A. Street emphasized that to make this work, everyone has to be committed. The building preservation effort has to be in harmony with open space consideration. The City needs to make a committment to make it happen, and also must be fair with the operator of the building.

The Commission discussed environmental harzard questions such ^{as} asbestos in the encapsulated fire proofing, underground tanks in a forest area, lead paint, etc. They also questioned whether there would be a conflict with public passive recreation and a private party, such as a wedding. Further discussion ensued of purchase/financing options and parties to be involved; encouraging pre-empting a banquet hall at the golf course; building lots on

site ~~off~~ ^{here} is contemplated

Laurel Grove Road; accessibility to the back allée; caretakers' quarters; and water supply (on its own wells). D. Goff asked the intent of the Conservation Commission; and were to go from here. A. Street replied that the GMPT is willing to help with the building, if the rest is taken on as an Open Space by the City. Development of the facility would be taken on at no cost to the City. A. Siniscalchi said he would add this to his Committee's agenda, and K. Coley commented on her research into the records of the original landscaping through the Smithsonian. Information may be at the Springfield Armory.

BREAK - 8:19 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Old Business

1. Aquifer Protection: deferred
2. P & Z Subdivision and Cluster Regulations: C. Harris reported that their hopes of seeing these passed soon were dashed at the latest P&Z meeting when the Chamber of Commerce came up with some opposition and a request for review by a new land-use Council they were putting together. R. Klattenberg reported that Bill Warner does not have any major problems with the Conservation Commission comments. Discussion ensued about the Chamber's Land Use Council, why it did not review and comment in the same time frame as everyone else, and who the qualified environmentalists on it were. A motion was made by A. Siniscalchi, seconded by J. Brawerman, to write a letter to Ann Loffredo (P&Z Chair) with copy to Bill Warner, indicating the Conservation Commission's concern and opposition to the turn of events regarding the delay in adoption of the subdivision regs. During discussion, a motion was made by K. Coley, seconded by J. Chace, to add to the aforementioned letter, a comment pointing out to the P&Z Commission that the action of passing the subdivision regulations in no way precludes future amendments forthcoming from viable suggestions from the Land Use Council. The amendment passed unanimously followed by a unanimous vote on the motion.
3. Pesticide Applications: No report
4. Workshops with Terry Tondro: R. Klattenberg indicated these were "on hold" for now; however, M. Giamei suggested Prof. Tondro might be of help to the Open Space Committee for both the "Fees in Lieu" ordinance and for Open Space Management plans.
5. DOT/Route 9 Erosion Problem: C. Harris spoke to both D. Cooper and D. Cunningham at DEP who will refer it to DOT. The problem is still there and he requested it remain on the agenda. The watercourse did not show up on maps for P&Z or IWWA.

New Business

1. Open Space Management Plan: A. Siniscalchi noted that commentators want the City to have good management plans for the new sites. Help has been offered from the Middlesex County Land Trust through John Friar. K. Coley suggested that as well as the Land Trust, other organizations such as Nature Conservancy, Rockfall Foundation, CFP, etc. could help the Conservation Commission and subsequently, moved that the Conservation Commission remain involved in the management plans; that staff and A. Siniscalchi be asked to ~~send a memo~~ to the Mayor for a meeting; and that other organizations be brought in on this. This motion was seconded by M. Giamei and voted unanimously.

Correspondence

CACIWC payments need to be checked out.

Public Forum

Moved up

Member Forum

C. Harris had three points 1) He asked about finding matching funds for the \$5M Open Space Fund; 2) He mentioned the SCS annual meeting on October 22nd at which Middletown will get an award (CT Agricultural Center 7:30); and, 3) Reported on a Stormwater Management Workshop.

Upon a motion by A. Siniscalchi, seconded by C. Harris, and voted unanimously, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.


Cynthia G. Wilcox

CGW/lmk

ACCEPTED ON: 12/12