

Minutes

Mendham Borough Open Space Advisory Committee

Date: 7 /14 / 2011 – 7:00 PM

Approved 9/08/2011

Meeting Location: Phoenix House, 2 West Main Street, Mendham, NJ

A. Call To Order:

B. Chairman's Adequate Notice Statement:

Notice of this meeting was published in the Observer Tribune and the Daily Record in accordance with the Open Meeting Act and was posted on the Phoenix House bulletin board.

C. Roll Call:

Present:

Mr. Connolly - Chair
Mr. Andrus - Council Representative
Mr. Barry
Mr. Topping

Absent:

Mr. DeBuvitz
Mr. Sprandel - Vice Chair/Secretary
Mr. Slutsky -

D. Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of 5/12/2011 were approved by unanimous vote.

E. Public Comment:

None

G . Old Business:

1. Tranquility Garden

George reported from his meeting with Ellen. Construction of the fence is still pending. There are three trees which will need to be removed first, DPD can do the work. Ellen has a meeting scheduled next week with the owners of the home to review plans to complete the garden and to discuss the rebuilding of the stone wall. While they have committed to paying 2/3 of the repair cost, she does not believe that they envision a repair cost as high as \$200,000. An alternative plan may be required such as retaining a small section of the current wall as a memorial.

2. Borough Loop Trail

Nothing new to report at this time. Ellen Sandman will try to get an update on our grant application (\$25,000) that was submitted last December.

3. Update Borough Master Plan

A sub-committee including George, Bill, and Charlie have taken on this task. The group had a meeting with Diana Callahan and Ellen Sandman last month (more on this meeting in New Business) and copies of the master plan including the confidential list of properties have been given to the group.

4. Bierwert Property

There was a discussion about the fact that the fact that farmer who is operating the Christmas tree farm now also has an organic garden and farm stand on the property. There are mixed feeling about this use. An increase in traffic on the access road will be a danger to children using the West Park facilities but this use does help insure that the property remains undeveloped as open space.

H. New Business:

1. Update from the Borough Council

John Andres gave the group an update on current issues involving the council. Relevant portions are incorporated into other areas of these minutes.

2. Use of Open Space Trust Fund

There was a discussion of the recently approved council resolution which funded the \$27,000 engineering study of the dam at the park on Mountain Avenue from the Open Space Trust Fund. The consensus was that while this

may have been legally allowable under the enabling ordinance, it was not the intent of the fund that was sold to the voters who enacted it. Perhaps the ordinance or the master plan should be amended to specify that funds from the trust funds may only be used to repair or maintain property which was originally acquired with open space funds.

3. Role of Open Space Advisory Committee

George updated the group about the discussions with Ellen during the master plan update meeting last month about having the committee be more active in relevant issues as they occur rather than bring informed of them after the fact. The committee would like to have the opportunity to comment and be involved as we were in the resolution to repair the dam. Ellen committed at that meeting to keep the committee updated on a timely basis and to seek input from the group when it is appropriate. It was decided that George would draft and circulate a letter to Ellen confirming that.

F. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM

Next meeting:

The next meeting will be on 9/8/2011 at 7 PM at the Phoenix House

George Connolly
Acting Secretary