

# Minutes of the Open Space Committee

December 28, 2009

Mayor Weinstein called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

**Present:** Mayor Steven Weinstein, Councilmember Ed Trawinski, Superintendent of Recreation Jim Graff, Michael Hakim, Crystal Robbins, Joan Goldstein, Ira Frankel, Jack Susser, Heather Blecher, Maureen Moriarty, Benny Salerno, Wendy Dabney, Peter Kortright, Kurt Peluso and Ted King.

**Absent:** Acting Manager Joanne Kwasniewski

## **Minutes and Attendance:**

A motion was made by the Committee to accept the minutes with corrections.

## **Updates:**

George Street – Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated that the firehouse is moving along. When it is finalized, the Borough will have a grand opening as the first completed open space project.

Michael Hakim stated that there was a small issue with the survey, but it is straightened out. It was coordinated with Lisa Stern at Green Acres.

Status of Lackland Properties – Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated that this is still in the hands of the attorney.

Naugle Property: There were some positive feelings from the presentation and the Borough is waiting for a willing seller. Since Nadeni has taken possession of the house it has continued to deteriorate. Several complaints have been made to the property maintenance department.

Daly Field: The Council is moving forward with the Council's plans for eminent domain.

**Discussion of Master Plan:** Peter Kortright summarized the Master Plan. The Planning Board was thinking about reexamination of the Master Plan for a couple of years. Many issues have come up from various boards and committees. With all of the changes in the Borough, the Planning Board decided to redo the entire Master Plan. A new Master Plan has not been done in awhile. A subcommittee was created with Todd Malkin as the chairman. The subcommittee has reached out to all the boards, commissions and committees to inquire the concerns and visions. All committees should formally put their ideas into the Master Plan.

A suggestion was made that since the last Master Plan was done, many other suggestions have arisen, but the ideas should be written down so the ideas are not forgotten. There should be documentation. Peter Kortright explained that the Planning Board members write notes to themselves. The Planning Board is depending on each committee to come up with those issues.

Deputy Mayor Weinstein stated that when the Naugle property came up five or six years ago, there was an arrangement that the developers had to get approval from the Zoning and

Planning Boards. There is a chance with the new Master Plan to put the Naugle House on the list, that if the property becomes available that the Borough wants to save it for open space.

It should be a "wish list." It is easier to put all the properties on the Master Plan list now, and then have to revise the plan at a later date. It is a vision plan, what the Open Space Committee wants to see for Fair Lawn over the next 10 years.

The document is going to be a lengthy process and it will probably take over a year to complete. The COAH and affordable housing is going to take time. Peter Kortright stated that the Master Plan should be done right rather than rushed. There can be addendums to the Master Plan, if anything should come up at a later date. Any addendums would have to go through the Planning Board.

The Planning Board will review all of the suggestions from the other boards, committees and commissions. There may be some overlap between the committees. There are sections of the Master Plan that relate to open space, recreation and greening so those are the sections that the Open Space Committee should be looking at.

All committee members should bring a copy of the Open Space and Recreation Plan to the next meeting. There are no deadlines on the ideas for the Planning Board.

Michael Hakim stated that the Borough's only obligation is to adopt a reexamination report of the Master Plan within six years of 2004. The Planning Board will be working with a planner. Michael Hakim recommended that the members read the municipal land use law section on the Master Plan in the New Jersey Administrative Code.

Michael Hakim stated that the vision of the Open Space Committee is embodied in the Open Space and Recreation Plan. The Open Space Committee should update the Open Space and Recreation Plan and then the Planning Board should adopt that document into the Master Plan.

Michael Hakim stated that this is an opportunity for a green way along the Passaic River, which is not part of the Master Plan currently. The Committee should put some details into the suggestions.

The Environmental Resource Inventory should be part of the conservation plan element. This is an optional element. Wendy Dabney stated that the Environmental Commission has had the idea of a green way along the Passaic River for awhile.

Michael Hakim stated that this is the one document that is exclusively the purview of the Planning Board. The Mayor and Council can have input, but this is the vision organize by the Planning Board. It is the responsibility of the governing body to implement the proper ordinances that follow the Master Plan.

The governing body can choose to implement the recommendations of the Planning Board or not to implement the recommendations and do something else. The Master Plan is of no consequence except for use variances and rezoning. The Planning Board adopts the Master Plan not the governing body, the governing body implements the plan.

The appointed planner will advise the Planning Board to adopt as a reexamination report of the Master Plan report done in 2004 because the Borough is in the process of undergoing a thorough revision of the Master Plan. The planner will guide the Planning Board.

The countdown at the lights is a great idea and the idea should be put into the Master Plan to put them at all the lights in the Borough. Councilmember Trawinski stated that there are some members of the community that do not want them in specific areas for religious reasons.

PSE&G has done some work at the intersection of Ferry Heights and Fair Lawn Avenue. The suggestion was made to beautify the area.

The Open Space and Recreation Plan will be available at the next meeting. Michael Hakim will put together some bullet points so the committee can start the discussion.

Councilmember Trawinski stated that a recommendation for the bullet point list is open space in regards to density. For example, if a developer, Radburn, happens to be developing Hayward and it is next to Archery, the developers are making the pitch that the open space on Archery, which is deed restricted should count in the density requirements. This is not just in Radburn.

The governing body can encourage the Planning Board to have a meeting along the river with the public. When having a meeting about historic sites, they could move the meeting to the County Park near the Naugle property.

Michael Hakim stated that the Environmental Resource Inventory will be completed within the next couple of months when the Master Plan is at its earliest stages. The ERI should be disseminated throughout the community.

February 25 is a Green Fair at the Community Center. There is an ANJEC presentation at 7:30 pm. Pictures of the places on the Open Space Inventory can be displayed at a table at the Green Fair. The Open Space and Recreation Plan can also be on display. The Naugle property display board can be displayed. A sign with the committee's mission statement can be displayed.

The property next to Parisi's on Banta Place is a warehouse. There is space on Banta Place that someone of the committee could look into for open space.

Having open space is beneficial, but it is going to cost. Maintenance is always a factor. The Borough should go for properties along the waterways. It is environmentally safer to protect the property along the waterways. The time is short to repair the environment.

Michael Hakim stated that the Green Acres bond issue passed in November. Once appropriated by the State Legislature, which could take some time, Green Acres will be soliciting requests for additional funding. Traditionally, Green Acres has received those requests in February and in August. It will probably not be in February. He wondered if the committee wants to put in another request. This would be an extension of the existing grant.

Michael Hakim stated that the committee should be proactive about properties that have already been pre-approved. It is recommended that a letter be sent again to all of the pre-approved property owners stating that the Borough is interested in purchasing the property.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 1, 2010

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned.

**2010 Meeting Dates**

February 1, 2010

February 22, 2010

March 22, 2010

April 26, 2010

May 24, 2010

June 28, 2010

July 26, 2010

August 23, 2010

September 27, 2010

October 25, 2010

November 22, 2010

December 27, 2010