



MINUTES OF MEETING OF 16 SEPTEMBER 1976

SUBJECT: Possible transfer to State ownership of land near Scudder Falls

PRESENT:

For the D & R Canal Commission: Benjamin B. Kirkland  
Donald B. Jones  
James C. Amon

N.J.D.E.P.: Alfred T. Guido  
Michael J. Galley  
Melvin H. Myers

For the City of Trenton: Mayor Arthur J. Holland  
John Clarke  
George Dougherty

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This meeting was called in order to discuss possible ways of transferring land from the City of Trenton to the State of New Jersey for inclusion in the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park.

The following information about the property was established:

The City owns about 12 acres altogether, Block S-438, Lot 2 in Ewing Township.

The property is presently assessed at \$80,000.

There are 14 structures on the property, not owned by the City. Of these 14, 7 are summer homes, 4 are year-round homes, and 3 are sporting clubs.

The property is in the flood plain of the Delaware River.

Because the City must pay more in property taxes to Ewing than it collects in leases, it must dispose of the property. Mayor Holland said that the present residents are unable to purchase the property their homes are on because the property is in one parcel. He is afraid a speculator would be able to outbid the residents' organization and then the residents could

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James C. Amon  
Executive Director

receive poor treatment. If the State would be considerate of the residents' needs he would prefer to see the property become part of the Canal Park.

Mr. Guido stated that everyone could see that the land is valuable and that he believes that sooner or later it should be acquired as part of the Canal Park. The value of the property would be as open space, Mr Guido pointed out, so different arrangements would have to be made for the different kinds of houses. The summer residents could be evicted. The sporting clubs could be given continuing rights but their structure and function would have to be examined to be sure they were in the public interest. The year-round residents could be given life plus the life-time of the surviving spouse rights to their houses. But leases would never be offered for more than one year terms.

Mayor Holland said that the City may not want money for the property. Perhaps they could just make arrangements for an orderly transfer.

Mr. Dougherty said that the present tenants are like squatters but the City can probably convey title in fee simple. He also pointed out that although there is a 1 January 1977 deadline on the leases he could probably work out an extension of City ownership beyond that date.

Mr. Guido outlined the procedure for State acquisition as follows:

1. The State must have an appraisal to determine fair market value.
2. The State would then offer the fair market value price to the City.
3. The City could take less than the fair market value price.

Before any of these steps could be carried out it would be necessary to have Commissioner Bardin's approval of the transaction.

Mayor Holland will make a presentation to the Trenton City Council. If they approve the deal he will contact Mr. Amon who will in turn write a memo to Commissioner Bardin explicitly outlining the reasons for acquisition.