



MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 8 AUGUST 1977

TIME: 12:30 to 4:10 p.m.  
 PLACE: The Canal House, 25 Calhoun Street  
 Trenton, N.J.  
 DATE: Monday, 8 August, 1977

ATTENDING:

Commissioners: Mr. Kirkland, Mr. Jones, Mr. Sayen,  
 Mr. Jessen, Mr. Burns, Mr. Hamilton,  
 Mr. Torpey, Mr. Picco  
 Staff: Mr. Amon and Mrs. Max  
 DEP: Mr. Greg Chase, Bureau of Water Facilities  
 Operations  
 Mr. Eric Pearl, Assistant to Betty Wilson  
 Mr. Frank Rigg, Chief, Bureau of Parks  
 DAG: Mr. Morton Goldfein

GUESTS:

Mrs. Jessamine Merrill, League of Women  
 Voters  
 Mr. Thomas Schrope, Somerset County Planner  
 Mr. Thomas Decker, Somerset County Engineer  
 Mr. Norman Mathis, Somerset County Assistant  
 Engineer  
 Mr. Warren Nevins, Somerset County Freeholder  
 Mr. George Mauro, Jr., Deputy County Counsel  
 Mr. Philip Buchanan  
 Mrs. Abigail Barrows } Somerset Citizens  
 Mrs. Lura Gund } for Environmental  
 Mrs. Ellen Saber } Protection  
 Mrs. Phyllis Schwartz }  
 Mrs. Marguerite Nist, representative from  
 Montgomery Township  
 Mr. Thomas Weidner, Counsel for Somerset  
 Citizens for Environmental Protection

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EXECUTIVE	COMMISSIONERS					
DIRECTOR	Benjamin B. Kirkland	Martin D. Jessen	Donald B. Jones	Rocco D. Ricci	Joseph H. Burns	James C. Saven
James C. Amon	Chairman	Vice-Chairman	Treasurer	Bruce A. Hamilton	Arthur J. Holland	Frank J. Torpey

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
 Brendan Byrne, Governor Rocco D. Ricci, Acting Commissioner

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Chairman Kirkland brought the meeting to order and stated that the requirements of the Open Public Meeting Law had been properly met for the meeting of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission on August 8, 1977.

It was moved by Mr. Sayen and seconded by Mr. Jessen to approve the minutes of the 11 July meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

#### Review of the Bureau of Water Facilities Operations Proposal

Mr. Kirkland explained to Mr. Chase that some of the Commissioners were concerned about giving conceptual approval to the proposed list of projects because they believe the Commission should be consulted on each project at an early stage of its development. The Commissioners do not want to approve these projects in concept at this time and see them again only after they have become finished drawings.

After extensive discussion it was agreed that Mr. Amon would be given an opportunity to meet with the consultants for each project at an early stage of planning. Mr. Burns pointed out that if the Commission is not consulted, the Bureau of Water Facilities could find their plans out of character with Commission goals and the Commission would then have to modify or even reject the plans. Mr. Burns then moved that the Commission approve all of the projects as presented as to concept with the understanding that before final plans are made, the Bureau communicate with the Commission on the plans. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sayen and carried unanimously.

#### Leases and Permits

Mr. Amon explained that information on the one permit to be discussed had not been received until the morning of 8 August and therefore, was not on the agenda. The application for a special use permit was from Edward Joscelyn, watchman at Smith's Mill.

It was noted by Mr. Jones that Mr. Joscelyn keeps railroad cars elevated on blocks which detract from the property. The Commission agreed that, since Mr. Joscelyn's work was quite minimal and that he contributed to diminishment of the property's beauty, Mr. Goldfein draw a document giving Mr. Joscelyn notice to leave within 6 months and stipulating that he remove the railroad cars. Mr. Amon suggested that the Commissioners vote

on the permit when it is redrawn.

#### Review Zone Procedure

Mr. Amon presented a chart demonstrating the steps for obtaining review zone permits. As the Commissioners could not agree on the time element to be stated in the procedural guide, it was resolved that Mr. Amon and Mr. Burns meet to discuss this problem and present alternatives at the September meeting.

#### Code of Ethics

Mr. Kirkland re-introduced the topic of the Code of Ethics which had been tabled until this meeting. Mr. Picco commented that the status of the Commission is subject to the Code because it is a body with substantive power affecting land acquisition. Since several of the Commissioners were concerned that their outside businesses might in some way conflict with the Code, Mr. Picco asked that all problems be stated in writing and forwarded to him. The Code is not yet complete and suggestions from the Commissioners could prove enlightening.

#### Commission Meeting

The Commissioners reaffirmed that they will have lunch at 12:00 noon and begin business at 12:30 p.m. The September meeting will take place as usual on the second Monday. Commencing in October, Commission meetings will be held on the second Tuesday.

#### Griggstown Bridge

Mr. Kirkland welcomed the representatives from Somerset County and asked County Freeholder Warren Nevins if they would like to make a presentation of their proposal for a two-lane bridge at the Griggstown Causeway. Mr. Nevins first introduced Mr. Thomas Decker, County Engineer, who pointed out that traffic is increasing on the Causeway and can be expected to continue increasing. Mr. Decker said that any one-lane structure would be unsafe. He said that the State would not permit a weight restriction on a county road, but that a "light traffic" designation may be available. Mr. Thomas Schrope, of the County Planning Office, spoke next. He said that the County Planning Office looked upon Griggstown as a "village neighborhood" and that its quality should be preserved. For this reason the county has proposed

a by-pass route for the future, but it is inconceivable that this by-pass will be undertaken in less than 20 years. In the interim, Mr. Schrope observed, something must be done to accommodate the traffic that will be generated by the expected development in the area. Mr. Schrope said that people will use whatever is near, regardless of the hazard, so that the one-lane bridge will not deter traffic volume. Next, Mr. Mauro spoke in favor of the proposal. He, too, emphatically spoke of the hazard of a one-lane bridge and the unavailability of any solution except a two-lane bridge.

Mr. Kirkland then read a memo from ATG which said that the Division of Parks and Forestry had no objections to the proposal, but that the Green Acres Office and the Canal Commission would have to be involved in the transfer of land.

Extended discussion was held on the following points:

1. estimate of repair of existing one-lane bridge versus new two-lane bridge.
2. safety factors.
3. possible increase of traffic due to expansion of the bridge.
4. effect of a two-lane bridge on the quality of life in Griggstown (as an historic and village neighborhood).
5. effect of land change on sewerage.
6. how increased traffic will affect Griggstown as an access point to the Canal Park.

Mr. Amon then made a staff report on the proposal. He pointed out that the Commission's enabling statute instructs the Commission to review such proposals in light of the Commission's master plan. He quoted from the master plan section which describes the Griggstown area as a "special node" because of the confluence of historic sites, recreational use, and natural area access at the site. Mr. Amon said that a significant increase in traffic would, in his opinion, have a detrimental impact on this important park site. He observed that one could only speculate on the role of the width of the bridge in the traffic count on the Causeway, but he believed that bigger and better roads attracted more traffic. He therefore concluded with his recommendation against the proposed two-lane bridge.

Mr. Weidner, Counsel for the Somerset Citizens for Environmental Protection noted that approximately 1000 citizens had signed a petition supporting repair of the existing one-lane

bridge and opposing a new two-lane bridge and gave a report on the reasons for this petition. He also stated that in the minutes of the Commission meeting of 10 May 1976, the Commissioners agreed that the one-lane bridge should be repaired or replaced with another one-lane bridge; a two-lane bridge would bring additional traffic to Griggstown and would change the ambiance of the village.

Mr. Picco moved that the Commission withhold formal action on this application until all necessary State permits have been obtained. It was explained that it would be inappropriate to have all state permits. Permits may have attached conditions which may alter the project and subsequently the decision of the Commission. The motion was withdrawn with the understanding that a vote not be taken on this project at this time.

Mr. Kirkland stated his opinion that a fair decision could not be reached until a public hearing was held. Somerset County Planners agreed to a formal presentation at a public gathering. Mr. Buchanan asked that notice of the public hearing be published at least two weeks in advance and that the site be large enough to accomodate at least 100 people.

Mrs. Nist read a resolution from the Montgomery Township Committee urging that repairs be made as quickly as possible to the existing bridge and that a two-lane bridge not be constructed. A copy of the resolution was presented for Commission files.

The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.