

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 16 AUGUST 1989

TIME: 12:00 NOON - 2:10 PM
DATE: Wednesday, 16 August 1989
PLACE: D & R Canal Commission
Prallsville Mills
Stockton, New Jersey

ATTENDING:

COMMISSIONERS: Messrs. Kirkland, Jessen, Pauley, Zaikov;
Mrs. Nash

STAFF: Messrs. Amon and Dobbs; Ms. Holms
Deputy Attorney General Michael Kahn

GUESTS: Bill McKelvey, Canal Society of
New Jersey/American Canal Society
Bill Moss, Canal Society of New Jersey
Bob Litke, Capital City Redevelopment
Corp.
Kay and Larry Pitt, Canal Society of NJ
Dolly Minis, Canal Watch
Barbara Thomsen, Canal Watch
John Kraml, Division of Parks & Forestry
Paul Stern, D & R Canal State Park
Eileen Katz
Eugene G. Gross, Water Supply Authority

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Amon asked the Commissioners about the possibility of changing September's meeting from Wednesday, 20 September to Thursday, 21 September.

CANAL PARK SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Stern commented on the mowing of the Canal Park towpath. Mr. Amon mentioned a letter from a wildflower enthusiast that criticized the timing of the mowing. Mr. Stern replied that due to lack of equipment and manpower it would be impossible to reorganize the mowing schedule to allow for specific wildflower bloomings. He also stated that the fields on park property were mowed once a year, after the first frost.

A quorum was attained at this point, so Mr. Kirkland opened the meeting by stating that all applicable provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law of 1976 had been met.

MINUTES

Mr. Jessen moved approval of the minutes from the meeting of 19 July 1989. Mrs. Nash seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

LEASES

Mr. Amon commented on three lease renewals and one new lease. Of the renewals, one was for a parcel of land behind the Lambertville Bridgetender's house--\$150 per year for access to an antique shop and parking. The second was for the use of land for a horse farm between River Road and the Millstone River in Blackwell's Mills; at \$10 per acre, a total of \$390 per year. The third renewal was for the use of .4 acre in Hillsborough (\$27.50 per year) which is adjacent to the back yard of the applicant. A new lease application for a canoe livery in Titusville (to replace the former Abbott's Canoe Rental) was discussed by Mr. Amon; the fee would be \$750 per year. The Canal Park would set top and bottom fees for the canoe rentals.

Mr. Amon recommended approval of all leases. Mrs. Nash moved approval; Mr. Zaikov seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

REVIEW ZONE PROJECTS

Mr. Amon presented the following A Zone projects:

- 89-1808 - Wermuth Structure
- 89-1772 - Two State Street Square
- 89-1776 - Lambertville House Addition
- 88-1669 - Village Square at Lambertville

According to Mr. Amon, the Wermuth Structure, an office/apartment building in South Bound Brook, would not be seen from the Canal Park. Neither would Two State Street Square, a high rise office building in Trenton. The Lambertville House Addition is a four-story addition on the rear of the Lambertville House, an historic inn and restaurant. The building would be renovated--the new architecture having complementary historic characteristics. The Village Square at Lambertville is an expansion of an existing office/retail center plus 10 two-story townhouses. The center would not be visible from the Canal Park.

Mr. Amon stated that all four projects are in keeping with the nature of their surroundings and would not have a harmful visual impact on the Canal Park. He recommended approval.

Mr. Jessen moved approval; Mr. Pauley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Dobbs presented the following B Zone projects:

- 89-1754 - DPW Garage & Mosquito Facilities
- 89-1749 - Neighborhood Suites Hotel
- 89-0962B - Terumo Corp.
- 88-1044 - Fox Chase at South Brunswick
- 87-1459 - Bowers Office Building

The first project consists of 50,000 sq. ft. of one-story office and maintenance buildings with a new salt storage dome for Somerset County. Neighborhood Suites Hotel is 10 two-story buildings containing 162 hotel suites on Davidson Avenue in Somerset. Terumo is a one-story office/warehouse; Fox Chase at South Brunswick is 303 single family homes, and the Bowers Office Building is one three-story building in West Windsor.

Mr. Dobbs stated that provisions for water quality and storm water protection have been met for all projects; he recommended approval. Mrs. Nash moved approval of the B Zone projects; Mr. Jessen seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF CAPITAL CITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Robert Litke, Executive Director of the Capital City Redevelopment Corporation, presented a plan for the redevelopment of a portion of Trenton. The portion being planned contains a section of the Canal Park. Mr. Litke stated that this part of Trenton has three valuable aesthetic assets that are not currently being used; the Delaware River, the D & R Canal, and the Assunpink Creek. The redevelopment plan shows utilization of these resources and an approach toward restoring the low-rise, historic nature of this downtown section--a beginning toward the revitalization of a portion of Trenton.

Mr. Litke stated that Route 29, a 1960's version of an urban expressway, cuts off access to the Delaware River. The Redevelopment Plan proposes to turn part of Route 29 into a boulevard with lights and pedestrian crossings.

Mr. Litke showed plans of a road that would run alongside the Canal to provide access to the Canal Park, and to alleviate traffic from Bank and Perry Streets. It would be a one-way street, eastbound. A housing development is proposed along the new "Canal Road", described by Mr. Litke as multi-family rowhouses.

Other features of the plan are to provide access to Assunpink Creek by opening up areas currently in culverts, and to reduce building heights; the highest, at State Street, being reduced from 14 to 10 stories, and progressively moving downward to six, four, and three stories for the Mill Hill section. A 1000-car parking garage is proposed for Bank and Willow Streets (next to the Canal). The housing units along the Canal would be limited to four stories; according to Mr. Litke, two and three-story structures would be more likely to be built.

Mrs. Nash expressed concern about the height and type of structures being proposed near the Canal Park. She also stated that the proposed road looked like a major traffic artery because it comes off of Route 1.

Mr. Kirkland asked where the initial funding would come from. Mr. Litke stated that legislation had appropriated \$5 million, part of which would be used to encourage private investment.

Mr. Amon reviewed the Commission's concerns; what kind of buffer would be provided for the Canal Park, how much volume and what speeds would the new road maintain, would there be any open areas, and how would the height of the enclosing elements affect the park? He asked Mr. Litke if any of the plans could be changed at this time. Mr. Litke answered that although the plans were in a final proposal stage, there would be a public hearing on 12 September, and that the planners would listen to comments and criticism.

Mrs. Thomsen suggested building a path along the filled-in portion of the canal.

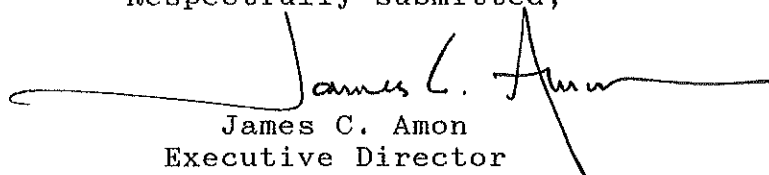
REVIEW OF ACTIONS OUTSIDE THE CANAL PARK BUT RELEVANT TO IT

Mr. Amon reviewed five topics. The first was the status of cross-acceptance among counties with the State Development Plan. Hunterdon and Mercer Counties have both recommended that the D & R Canal be declared a scenic corridor. Mr. Amon has suggested that Somerset and Middlesex Counties do the same. The second issue was that of greenway movements--according to Mr. Amon, there is more and more interest in protecting natural corridors such as the D & R Canal, exemplified by the start of organizations such as Delaware River Greenway and Monmouth County Greenway, as well as the successes of ongoing organizations such as D & R Greenway. Mr. Amon's third topic was about increase in local environmental groups; e.g., Trenton Open Space Coalition, Montgomery Township Open Space, and Lawrence Township Conservation Foundation.

Mr. Amon spoke of the new Green Acres Bond Act--\$300 million is proposed. The breakdown of this bond is as follows: \$50 million for farmland preservation, \$20 million for Transfer Development Rights, \$80 million for state acquisitions, \$140 million for local acquisitions, and \$10 million for private acquisitions. Finally, Mr. Amon discussed the need for a road development plan for roads that run alongside the Canal Park, suggesting that Canal Road in Franklin Township and Mapleton Road in Plainsboro be designated Scenic Roads.

The meeting ended at 2:10.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James C. Amon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left and another extending to the right.

James C. Amon
Executive Director