

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 17, 1993

TIME: 12:10 PM to 2:30 PM  
DATE: Wednesday, February 17, 1993  
PLACE: Canal Commission Office  
Prallsville Mills, Stockton, NJ



DELAWARE AND RARITAN  
CANAL COMMISSION

ATTENDING:

COMMISSIONERS: Messrs. Barker, Kirkland, Pauley, Torpey,  
Zaikov; Mrs. Nash

STAFF: Mr. Amon, Mr. Dobbs, Ms. Holms  
Ms. Carol Blasi, Deputy Attorney General

GUESTS: Paul Stern, D&R Canal State Park  
Bill Moss, Canal Society of New Jersey  
Robert V. Kiser, Princeton Township  
A. Gregory Chase, NJ Water Supply Authority  
Fred Brown, D&R Canal Watch  
Fred M. Porter, Princeton Township  
Rick Collier, Princeton Township  
Ellen Scuter, Princeton Township  
Gordon Keith, Port Mercer Civic Association  
Bill McKelvey, Friends of NJRR & Transportation  
Museum  
Joe Bird  
Fred L. Pearlmutter, Kerby Cooper - Firmenich  
P.D. Hartlove, Firmenich  
Paul Darmofalski, P.E., - Firmenich  
Abigail Barrows  
Ursula Buchanan, D&R Canal Coalition  
Leo Laaksonen, Mercer County  
Deborah Herzog, Yorkshire Village  
Kevin Moore, Jamieson, Moore, Peskin  
Deborah Poritz, Jamieson, Moore, Peskin  
Lea Kahn, Lawrence Ledger/Princeton Packet  
Richard Moralle, T&M Associates  
Gary Dahms, T&M Associates  
Mary Caffrey, Trenton Times  
Frank J. Petrino, Wynmoor Associates  
Rev. Linda DeSantis, Unitarian Universalist  
Church  
Rhett H. Jones, Unitarian Universalist Church  
Sharon Bilanin, Princeton Township  
Margen Penick, Princeton Reg. Planning Board  
Harrison Uhl, Port Mercer Civic Association  
Kay\* & Larry Pitt, Canal Society of NJ

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EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR  
James C. Amon

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R. William Pauley

Scott A. Weiner  
Frank J. Torpey

Winona D. Nash  
Douglas H. Palmer

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ENERGY  
James J. Florio, Governor Scott A. Weiner, Commissioner

Bill Neff, Chairman, West Windsor Planning Board  
Karl Pehnke, Raymond Reges Associates  
Robert von Zumbusch  
Harry Heher, Lawrence Twp. Resident  
Bill Guhl, Lawrence Twp. Manager

Mr. Kirkland opened the meeting and announced that this was a regular meeting of the D&R Canal Commission and that all provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law of 1976 had been met.

#### MINUTES

Mr. Pauley moved the approval of the minutes of January 20, 1993; Mr. Torpey seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### REVIEW ZONE ACTIONS

Mr. Amon presented two "A" Zone projects:

92-2056 - DeCicco and Randall Residence - Franklin Township,  
Somerset County

Mr. Amon stated that the applicant proposes to construct a one-story addition to his house in the Griggstown Historic District. The addition is compatible with the architecture of the house and with the character of the district.

92-2074 - Grossman's Addition - Lawrence Township

The applicant proposes to expand an existing building supply store; the amount of impervious surface will not be increased. Two landscape buffers will be installed; one along a state-owned strip of land that includes an old turning basin and wooded area, and another along the addition itself. Mrs. Nash asked how much scrutiny had been given to the landscape plans; Mr. Amon responded that he had worked closely with the applicant and was satisfied with the final plans. Mrs. Nash moved approval of the two "A" Zone projects; Mr. Barker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Amon then presented an application for a waiver in the "A" Zone. The State House Capitol Complex in Trenton will eventually be expanding its parking area; in preparation for this, they are proposing to relocate underground utility lines. Mr. Amon stated that this relocation of utilities would not impact the Canal Park and recommended waiving the project from review requirements. Mrs. Nash moved waiving the project, Mr. Pauley seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Dobbs presented one "B" Zone project for reapproval:

88-1574 - Lawrence Hollow - Lawrence Township.  
31 single family houses on 16+ acres with 17% impervious area.

He stated that the approval had expired but that there had been no changes to the stormwater management plans, and recommended reapproval. He then presented two "B" projects for approval:

90-1860 - Federal Hill - Lawrence Township.  
46 single family houses on 30+ acres with 18% impervious coverage.

93-2078 - Firmenich - Plainsboro Township.  
1-story building and warehouse plus parking on 57+ acres with an increase from 11% to 15% impervious surface.

Mr. Dobbs stated that Commission requirements for stormwater management and water quality had been met for the two projects and recommended approval. Mrs. Nash moved approval of the three "B" Zone applications, Mr. Pauley seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Dobbs then presented a "B" Zone application for a waiver from the stream corridor regulations. He said that the applicant was proposing an addition onto the Unitarian Universalist Church in Hopewell Township. The existing church building is already in the 100-foot buffer of the 100-year flood plain, and according to Mr. Dobbs, the addition would not adversely impact the stream corridor's present ability to function as a natural buffer. Mr. Zaikov moved waiving the addition from strict compliance with the stream corridor regulations; Mrs. Nash seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### DISCUSSION OF PORT MERCER ROAD PATTERNS

Mr. Amon reviewed four traffic pattern alternatives for the Port Mercer area:

1. Leave things as they are.
2. A "2-bridge" solution: keeping the bridge at Port Mercer open, and building a new bridge to join with the bend at Province Line Road in Lawrence Township.
3. A "3-bridge" solution: a third bridge would be constructed to join with the bend at Quaker Road in Princeton Township.
4. A "1-bridge" solution: build the new bridge to connect with Province Line Road, and close the Port Mercer bridge.

Mr. Amon stated that the Commission's subcommittee for this issue had worked closely with the Nassau Park's engineers to try and lessen the impact of high traffic volume on the approach to the Port Mercer bridge. He said that representatives from Mercer County, West Windsor and Lawrence Townships preferred the 2-bridge solution and that West Windsor strongly opposes the 3-bridge solution. He stated that Princeton Borough and Princeton Township were concerned about the impact that increased traffic would have on the Princeton Pike/Quaker Road intersection and the historic district overall, as well as the property of the Institute for Advanced Study. Mr. Amon stated that DEPE Commissioner Weiner expressed a strong concern that a solution be found that would improve the existing situation. He concluding by saying that the subcommittee recommends the 1-bridge solution with a caveat that if a suitable design for the Port Mercer bridge and approach was presented, the Commission would consider it.

Mrs. Nash reviewed facts and findings of the subcommittee. She discussed Quaker Road's flooding problems, wetland and zoning constraints in Lawrence Township, and the significance of Port Mercer, designated a "special node" in the Master Plan. She concluded her report by recommending to close the Port Mercer bridge and working together with the developers, the county and municipalities to improve access to the Canal Park and minimize adverse traffic patterns in the area.

Mr. Pauley concurred with Mrs. Nash, adding that he wished to emphasize his opinion that Canal Pointe Road be extended; he said that this was an opportunity to protect this area of the Canal Park that will never happen again.

Mr. Barker stated that Commissioner Weiner and his staff have reviewed the situation and support the 2-bridge concept, and that closing the Port Mercer bridge would impede traffic.

Mr. Kirkland said that this is a regional traffic problem that should be addressed by the State DOT or the State Planning Commission, but unfortunately the Canal Commission is the only State agency that seems to have a role in this problem.

Ms. Souter recommended closing the Port Mercer Bridge. Ms. Bilanin said that the Canal Commission should help Port Mercer and protect what they have left. Ms. Penick stated that the Princeton Regional Planning Board would be considering a linear park along Quaker Road at a February 25th hearing on their Master Plan.

Mr. Neff, Chairman of the West Windsor Planning Board, stated that the change in zoning for Nassau Park was actually an improvement in traffic patterns for the area, and that West Windsor would not support extending Canal Pointe Boulevard.

Mr. Laaksonen, Director of Mercer County Planning Board, reminded the Commission that the Princetons passed resolutions supporting the 2-bridge solution, and that the 1-bridge solution was not available.

Mr. Moore, representing Wal-Mart, presented several reasons why the 1-bridge solution would not be "do-able", and stated that the 2-bridge solution was a good one.

Mr. Heher, Lawrence Township resident, recommended keeping the Port Mercer bridge open for pedestrians and fishermen only. He urged the Commissioners to consider the building of two new bridges and closing the Port Mercer bridge.

Mr. Guhl, Manager of Lawrence Township, stated that Lawrence Township would only support a 2- or 3-bridge solution, and would not accept a 1-bridge solution. Mr. Kirkland asked what he meant by "not accepting", and Mr. Guhl replied that Yorkshire Village's approval is conditioned upon the Port Mercer bridge remaining open.

Mr. Laaksonen said that the extension of Canal Pointe Boulevard to Quakerbridge Road is on the County Master Plan and that the county is pursuing the idea of this road becoming a local collector road.

Ms. Poritz, representing Wal-Mart, reiterated her client's position that a workable solution be reached, and that the 2-bridge solution is "do-able."

Mr. Torpey asked if a 2-bridge solution were accepted, could there be any further design improvements to reduce traffic impact on Port Mercer. Mr. Moralle said that additional signage and installation of flood gates could help. He also said that a serpentine approach to the existing bridge would be unsafe.

Mr. Amon asked Mr. Laaksonen how the county is addressing sending increased traffic to two already failing intersections (Province Line/Princeton Pike in Lawrence and Princeton Pike/Quaker in Princeton). He also pointed out that no improvements could be made to the Quaker Road/Princeton Pike intersection without destroying historic features that the county--along with everyone else--highly values. Mr. Laaksonen replied that they were discussing improvements to the first intersection with Lawrence and that the county would be willing to look at the Quaker Road intersection as well.

Mr. Zaikov stated that the Commission was charged with the obligation to protect the Canal Park, and asked the subcommittee for their final recommendation. Mrs. Nash said that she had not changed her mind and still recommended closing the existing bridge and working to improve access to the Canal Park and the Port Mercer Canal House. She moved conceptual approval of closing the Port Mercer bridge to vehicular traffic when a new one is built at the

bend in Province Line Road. Mr. Zaikov seconded the motion. Messrs. Kirkland, Pauley, Torpey, Zaikov, and Mrs. Nash voted in favor of the motion; Mr. Barker opposed the motion. The motion passed.

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

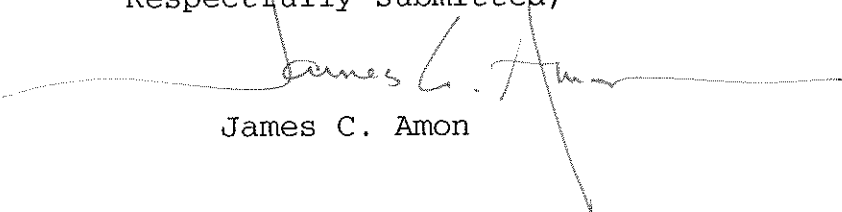
Mr. Pauley asked the Commissioners to support minimum design constraints on improvements to River Road and the Pike Run bridge in Montgomery Township. He moved approval of supporting the principle that the proposed improvements be held to a minimum width, and that these improvements minimally impact any existing trees and hedgerows. Mr. Torpey seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Amon announced the awarding of a \$55,000 grant to the Delaware River Mill Society by the New Jersey Historic Trust for the purpose of restoring the sawmill. He said that the Mill Society is planning to acquire architectural plans and specifications for converting the sawmill to a canal museum.

#### CANAL SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Stern said that the park rangers were busy helping Trenton police search for the missing artist from Bucks County.

Respectfully submitted,

  
James C. Amon