



**MAYOR & COUNCIL
THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 13, 2018**



The special meeting on Liberty Park/Pond Improvements of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Thursday, September 13, 2018 at the Municipal Complex, 1 School Street, Peapack, New Jersey and began at 7:03 p.m.

Mayor Muller called the meeting to order. Borough Clerk Nancy A. Bretzger read the Sunshine Notice "Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, Adequate notice of this Meeting Date was published in the Courier News and Bernardsville News on August 9, 2018, and posted at the Municipal Complex and the Borough Library. Action may be taken."

Mayor Muller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call indicated the following present:

Present: Mayor Muller, Councilman Caminiti, Council President Corigliano, Councilwoman Dietrich, Councilman Lemma, Councilman Simpson

Absent: Councilman Smith

Also present were: Christopher Tietjen, Administrator; and Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk

Mayor Muller explained that the meeting tonight is about the park. He stated that there will no action taken at this meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 5 MINUTES PER PERSON – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No one from the audience came forward.

Mayor Muller handed the meeting over to Councilman Caminiti, the head of the Property committee. Councilman Caminiti thanked Roy Smith and Bill Simpson for spear heading this project. He said that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to walk everyone through where we are in the process of improving the park and to solicit feedback from residents so that it can be integrated in the next planning steps. He gave a shout out to the Liberty Park Association. He introduced Carter van Dyke from Carter van Dyke Associates, Landscape Architect and Planner; and Dr. Steven Sousa from Princeton Hydro, here to address water quality issues. Councilman Caminiti noted that the NJDEP has jurisdiction over open bodies of water and so the borough has reached out to the department to get a Letter of Interpretation to determine what can be done with the pond. He stated that we can retain the footprint of the pond but not change it in any way due to state regulations.

PRESENTATION – LIBERTY PARK/POND IMPROVEMENTS

Carter van Dyke introduced himself and presented a PowerPoint show. He started by summarizing what he planned to cover during the meeting. The presentation started with several slides on site constraints, noting that there are wet paths/lawns, code issues, edge maintenance, walkway and stair maintenance, etc. He noted that the war memorials are the best he has seen in any community, but they need maintenance around them. He said there is a lack of conformity in benches, some worn out trash and



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A resident asked why can't the water continue to be diverted from Peapack Brook to the pond. Dr. Sousa said that there are regulatory constraints that weren't an issue in the past and also hydraulically this would be difficult to do. They will explore options with the DEP but think that the well is the easiest approach.

A resident asked if the dam on the Peapack Brook would be taken out. Dr. Sousa noted that the structure is owned by NJ Transit and that they are not responsive. If it fails there would be more impact upstream.

A resident asked what impact the proposed well would have on existing aquifer. Dr. Sousa answered that it would not have a significant impact and they will do some tests, noting that it will only have to be used as needed.

A resident asked why can't you just pump the water from the stream instead of from a well. Dr. Sousa said that it is easier to get a well permit.

Mr. van Dyke said that he wants to hear from all of the residents. He asked the residents what concerns them the most. Concerns from residents included: pond cleanliness, making it prettier; better drainage around and use of the walkways; cultured stone on the weir; geese droppings; crumbling edge of the pond; danger of crossing the weir; no fishing; general clean up; no nice vegetation; no continuity to tables and benches; lack of buffer from the street; lack of park's historical story/signage; lack of unity between tot lot and park; lighting; algae and smell; lack of ice skating; lack of formal and informal gathering spaces; misses large fountains in the water; lack of use of the Scout cabin; lack of activities; and sustainable solution to water quality to try to avoid cost of running pump

Mr. van Dyke discussed year-round maintenance of the park. He wants to make sure that the costs of maintenance are considered as they add features to the park.

Additional concerns included: consider eliminating Park Avenue; lack of safety around the pond, specifically the bridge and around the edges; lack of coordinating aesthetics; poison ivy; dam by the railroad trestle needs an inflow and outflow; swans; lack of memorial benches; back of car dealer; retaining wall along the road is ugly; lack of connection to the water because the monuments instead of walkway are next to water, so create a walk of war monuments in a different area; no rotation in the park; outdoor living room that is inviting to meet in; water quality and more efficient use of space; lack of communal spaces for teens that include hydration stations and active things to do; lack of view of borough hall; and lack of real restrooms and water fountains.

Mr. van Dyke then asked what do you want to see. Comments from council members included: public art in the park that brands Peapack Gladstone from other parks; make it look like a New England centerpiece with fishing and ice skating (no swans and algae); needs to be a destination and delight for all ages; a rotating art exhibit; and make the park larger by closing down Park Avenue and connect the tot lot. Council President Corigliano stated that the council saw a very creative plan from CVDA. He would like to see the pond features including a shallow wetlands section, bald cypress garden, boardwalks, etc. that were in the conceptual included in the final project.



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Additional things that residents stated they want to see included: a labyrinth; fix the water and the dam; better habitats for environmental learning; fishing; ice skating; fountains in the pond; quality of water; more nature and wildlife for photography; eliminate all steps, instead use ramps; visuals; plants that bloom at varying times; Scout cabin as a nature center open to public/gathering place; summer concerts and movies; signs about vegetation benefits; caution what the maintenance would be; simplicity stays; splash pad; straighten the flag pole; flowering lily pads; some way to keep deer away; view the brook; and information on historical origin of the park and the monuments.

Residents were then asked when was the last time you went to the park and what would make you go to the park this weekend. Responses included: bocce court; clean water; Art in the park; can't remember last time; better picnic tables; and amphitheater/classroom.

One recommendation from a resident was to look at other parks in town to determine their use and not to try to put everything into this park. Another comment was made that the park is a landmark in town and provides a visual impression for everyone driving through so we shouldn't block the view of the pond. A resident noted that since the swans are so much a part of the town's image they could be memorialized with topiary or statues.

Mr. van Dyke handed out paper dots to the audience in order for them to mark what concerns them the most and what they want done the most. After the audience completed this exercise, Mr. van Dyke recapped the three top concerns. They are cleanup of the pond, goose droppings, and underuse of the Scout cabin. The top three things residents want done the most are to improve water quality, increase size of park by closing Park Ave., and then there was a three-way tie between seasonal plantings, reasonably maintainable space and plan, and design park in the context of the other parks.

One resident noted that the survey was done two and a half years ago and he urged the council to stay committed because the community wants the park improved without delay. Mr. van Dyke noted that it'll take about two months with ideas and costs.

Councilman Caminiti stated that we had to wait for the NJDEP to get the Letter of Interpretation that tells us what we can do with the pond. The council needed to be mindful of that, but now the goal is to have something well underway for the 100-year anniversary in 2019.

Mr. van Dyke stated that he will leave the lists on the wall of the gym for a reminder of what was completed today. A resident asked about the swans and Council President Corigliano noted that they are currently fed and remain a problem that needs to be evaluated. A resident suggested that the borough needs a "Friends of Liberty Park" group. Councilman Caminiti thanked everyone for coming, including Mr. van Dyke, Dr. Sousa and all the residents.

PUBLIC COMMENTS -- 3 MINUTES PER PERSON -- AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

No one came forward.



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There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Council President Corigliano, seconded by Councilman Caminiti, that this meeting be adjourned at 9:05 p.m. This motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy A. Bretzger

Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk