



**MAYOR & COUNCIL
THE BOROUGH OF PEAPACK & GLADSTONE,
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
SPECIAL WORK SESSION MEETING APRIL 25, 2019**

The Special Work Session meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Peapack & Gladstone was held on Thursday, April 25, 2019 at the Municipal Complex, 1 School Street, Peapack, New Jersey and began at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Skinner 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 was published in the Courier News and Bernardsville News on April 18, 2019, and posted at the Municipal Complex and the Borough Library. Action may be taken."

Mayor Skinner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call indicated the following present:

Present: Mayor Skinner, Council President Corigliano, Councilman Caminiti, Councilwoman Dietrich, Councilwoman Murphy, Councilman Smith, Councilman Sweeney

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

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

No one came forward.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Skinner stated that they will open up the discussion on Liberty Park improvement costs.

Councilman Caminiti made introduction to the members of the audience and explained what was going to happen tonight. He stated that tonight we would go line by line the respective actions that we are considering and also the proposed costs for each action item. He noted that the changes were described as phase 1 and phase 2 but this does not indicate that these are separate actions, rather they indicate a sequence and a rough order of priority. He hopes that after tonight things will become clear about what we propose to do and how it will play out.

Councilman Smith explained that this has been a long road to get here and that the Liberty Park groundbreaking was 100 years ago this June. A group of citizens got together four or five years ago in anticipation of the centennial to put together some thoughts on renovating the park in conjunction with the anniversary. After years of work, a dozen or two volunteers, and multiple Council meetings and park architect meetings it distills down to the sheet in front of us. This is not set in concrete; we are here to discuss it and decide what we want to do as our submission for the final plan to the engineering designers. He noted that we've already accomplished several steps including meetings with the NJDEP and water analyses testing.

Councilman Smith went through each of the items on the sheet, starting with the water quality section.



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Site restoration – He noted that the numbers largely include prevailing wage rates that are required by state law. Much of the work will be done by the general contractor. Councilman Sweeney asked about the DPW doing work.

Pond restoration – Councilman Smith explained that a critical path item with this project is fixing the water. The pond is deemed hypo-utrophic, it's dying and there is a serious phosphorus problem in the sediment which causes the floating mat algae. He explained the hydro raking process. He explained two phoslock applications that are proposed. He addressed the dam safety analysis. The NJDEP is requiring that the dam be registered. This is for the dam at the southern end of the pond. He noted that we may need to upgrade the aeration system to make sure it has enough capacity. The big item in this group is the irrigation well. We have proposals for a test well.

Bio-engineered shoreline – The wire baskets with rocks are in good shape and they solidify the shoreline but the timbers need to be replaced. They plan to use cocologs and low growing aquatic grasses to have a pleasing and environmentally sustainable edge. The line item cost of \$35,000 for riparian buffer plantings was questioned as high. This is for about 8,000 to 9,000 square feet of plants. He discussed the floating wetland islands that act like a filter and the plant matter would absorb phosphorus and for the next 100 years the pond would be self-sustaining. The water lilies listed are just a snippet of what was originally proposed. They provide shade and cooling for the water and so these would be in the northwest corner and southeast corner as just a little fringe area. The drain pipe may need to stay depending on the outcome of the dam study.

Councilman Smith discussed groups that helped including Duke Farms and the Somerset County Park Commission. He said that when the steps are taken you do end up with great results.

The next section Councilman Smith discussed was site work.

Councilman Smith said this could be where we spend the bulk of the money. The main goal in this section is to fix the elevations in the park and put in drainage pipes to stop the flooding. He mentioned signage and trash receptables. He noted that any benches or tables in the flood plain need to be anchored down. The monuments are staying where they are.

He continued that a big one in this section is \$100,000 in lighting. This needs to be done by a licensed contractor with a specific design. We want the lighting to be soft and energy efficiency, with tasteful fixtures. We are thinking about solar. It was asked if we need lighting when the parks are closed at night. The number of fixtures was discussed, 14 are estimated. Lighting at Borough hall was discussed briefly but the water and the immediate park are the goal at this time.

The structures were discussed next. The gazebo will stay in place and seating and tables may be added. In the northwest corner of the park the bridge will be improved to make it more ADA compliant and the area will be dug out and plantings will be added. This will provide unity with the bridge, spillway and gazebo. On the southern end of the pond over the existing dam there is a walkway that is unsafe. The plan is to put a deck there with benches, which will provide a lovely photo location.

The next section Councilman Smith discussed was landscape enhancements. He stated that the Linden trees will be kept and trimmed along Main Street. The plantings will be cleaned up and enhanced so that



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there are low plants and the trees which will not obstruct the view of the pond from the road. Colors during different seasons were discussed. He brought up putting a rain garden in the southeast corner of the park. If used properly, the rain garden can be great for the areas where water settles. Plantings in this would absorb water and give some visual appeal in the southeast corner of the park. He noted that there are two endangered dawn redwoods in the park.

Councilman Smith continued with the 15% contingency, professional fees, and other soft costs. He summarized the numbers for each section which result in the \$1 million cost. Councilman Sweeney asked about the professional fees. Council President Corigliano noted that the architectural work was included, not the engineering. Council President Corigliano thinks that the fees are too high and should be 10% instead of 15%. Councilman Smith stated that Princeton Hydro will be handling the permits with NJDEP and the Borough will use the philosophy of "permit by regulation" to bring the project in on a timely and cost-effective manner. Councilman Sweeney has seen 8% fees for plans on houses. The lighting expert fee needs to come out of here.

Council President Corigliano stated that some of the numbers from Carter van Dyke were high and some low and that until the Borough has a set of plans and get bids from general contractors, we're not really going to know how much this will cost. He continued that the document needs refinement and that he thinks that Council needs to come up with a number that they're all comfortable with that includes a budget for donations and grants. He also thinks that we need to negotiate with Carter van Dyke and Princeton Hydro on their professional fees. There was discussion on what the final number should be.

Councilman Smith said that if we want to go back with \$750,000 as our number it will just take another month and we'll get another plan. But no matter what we are moving ahead with the water restoration. Councilwoman Murphy stated that the soft costs should be closer to 10% so that the hard costs can be a higher percentage of the total. Councilwoman Dietrich stated that she is also comfortable with the \$750,000 and she wants to utilize the DPW workers if this will help keep the costs down. Councilman Sweeney had brought up a referendum which he said he would be more comfortable doing if the labor and material costs were above a half million.

Council President Corigliano brought up phase 2 and what Council thinks should be done about items like new equipment for the tot lot and the removal of Park Ave. Councilman Caminiti stated that the park is the center of town and adds to the quality of life and property values in town. He continued that the Borough can do a million dollars without occurring any additional debt. Councilman Smith asked what his number would be and Councilman Caminiti responded that he would be comfortable with a higher number if it includes removing Park Ave. and adding in the tot lot and the Scout cabin. Councilwoman Murphy would like to see the water quality issue addressed first to ensure that it's successful before putting more money into the park.

Council President Corigliano stated that he would like to see this project not cause any debt. He continued that he would like to see soft cost come in under 18%. Residents prioritized water quality and closing Park Ave. He believes that we are making an investment for the next 40 to 60 years and therefore he thinks that we need to look at larger numbers. He agreed with what Councilman Caminiti stated about the park being the center of town and benefiting every resident. He thinks that economizing this by a few hundred thousand dollars is not the way to go. He believes that we should be hiring a general contractor to do the whole project and the project needs to go out to bid. Council



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President Corigliano stated his number is \$1.1 million. There is \$101,000 in grant money, \$100,000 in fundraising and he states that we can come up with \$900,000.

Councilman Sweeney feels that this is almost an extension of our budget process. He listed several things that are competing dollars for this money including a \$705,000 rescue fire truck, a sidewalk on Holland Ave., and \$300,000 for refurbishing a fire engine. He brought up the open space and recreation fund balance and that you don't know when the opportunity is going to come up to bid on properties. Councilwoman Murphy noted that preserving land on gateways in and out of the town does benefit everyone so she'd prefer that less than the \$450,000 proposed be used from the open space fund. Councilman Sweeney stated that he wants to bring down the amount used from the open space fund, based on the committee's recommendation. Council continued to discuss funding.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Bill Muller – Pottersville Road – Mr. Muller said thank you to the Council for the hard work. He stated that it was made clear to the public that open space money is available for the Borough-owned properties and he does not see a better project for the fund to be used for. He added that if you're going to spend \$1 million on a project this is a better, long term investment compared to a fire truck. He said that if you have a well-presented plan you can successfully fundraise. He said spend the money, do the park properly and create a place that people really enjoy.

Sasha Wolf – Overlook Ave. – Mr. Wolf thanked the Mayor and Council but he has a couple of concerns. He said that he does not want the Council to be too stingy with this project as good work requires good funds. He said it's important that this is done right. He has not heard anything about taxes and because this is such an important asset in town as a tax payer he is willing to pay more in taxes. He asked if taxes will go up. Council President Corigliano explained the funding. He believes that the money should be coming from public funds and government grants so that we are not beholden to any outside interests.

Steve Kinsey - Mosle Road – Mr. Kinsey asked what is the cost of simply adding phase 2. It is approximately \$150,000 to \$200,000.

Bob Baker - Mendham Rd. – Mr. Baker asked if anyone gone back to Carter van Dyke and asked him to reduce his fees right off the top. Councilman Smith responded that the basic fees came with the proposal earlier and the next step is to go to the design phase where the numbers can be negotiated.

Ann Fritz - Brook Hollow Rd. – Ms. Fritz stated that she thought it was a great discussion tonight but she came with the hope that some decisions would be made. She believes that we need to invest in the town, especially in the park which could be a beautiful place.

Mayor Skinner closed the public comment session.

Councilman Smith asked for a recap from Council. He asked that the Borough move forward on the water quality. He asked about the dam safety, the hydro-raking, the PhosLock, and the installation of the well. He asked about funding. Council President Corigliano stated that there is a plan and that as part of the budget process this year they set aside \$150,000. The ordinance needs to be introduced at the next



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meeting. Councilman Caminiti stated he is comfortable with \$1.1 million and if we can come in for less we should try to do so. He is also ok with using \$450,000 from the open space fund. He wants to get this rolling and get a jump start on fund-raising. Mayor Skinner, Councilman Sweeney and Councilwoman Dietrich are comfortable at \$750,000 and if there's an overrun they can address it. Councilwoman Dietrich added that she doesn't want to compromise on quality based on residents' feedback and she thinks that \$400,000 can come from open space. Councilman Sweeney stated that regarding the open space fund you can't really know what you're spending from year to year. Councilwoman Murphy originally said \$750,000 but she'd like everyone's input regarding shutting down Park Ave. because if that's added in then her number would be higher. She is comfortable going up to \$400,000 out of open space if they're incorporating closing Park Ave. because that makes it better open space. Councilman Smith stated that Mayor Skinner was talking \$750,000 and asked what he was comfortable with from open space. Mayor Skinner stated probably \$300,000 and said that if we get more fund-raising we can go over \$750,000. The Council discussed first responder access and agreed that it would be a good plan to shut down Park Avenue. Council will hold on a decision on a number and go back to Carter van Dyke to include closing Park Ave. and note that the costs are need to be scrubbed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – 3 MINUTES PER PERSON – AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

John Kappler - Holland Ave. – Mr. Kappler said bravo on making this one project.

Council President Corigliano thanked the audience for giving up their time to come tonight.

There being no other matters to be addressed by the Governing Body at this time, a motion was made by Councilman Sweeney, seconded by Councilwoman Dietrich, that this meeting be adjourned at 8:53 p.m. This motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy A. Bretzger, Borough Clerk