

Great Oak Park Committee Meeting 7/8/13 Draft meeting Minutes

The following Committee members were present. M.Guadagnino, S.Saliani, L.Haymon, M. Ostapczuk, C. Visconti, N. Larkin. Guests: R. Kunze,

M. Guadagnino opened the meeting at 8:03 pm on a motion and proceeded to distribute a proposed agenda.

Agenda Items:

1. Mission Statement –The Committee agreed to defer to a written set of proposed mission statement presented by R. Kunze.

2. Structure/By Laws - M.Guadagnino reminded those present that the Committee will follow “Sunshine Laws” guidelines with respect to open meetings and discussion requiring a quorum.

- Robert’s Rules - M. Guadagnino also suggested the meetings be run in accordance with “Roberts Rules of Order”. The Committee agreed.
- Agenda - M. Guadagnino suggested that the meeting agenda be drafted prior to the meeting and shared with the members.
- Minutes - M. Guadagnino requested that for their meeting M. Ostapczuk take noted and draft meeting minutes at a later date. During future meetings all members will rotate minute taking
- Elections /Reorganization - M. Guadagnino mentioned that he is not officially the chair of the committee and that there is an election of officers. M. Ostapczuk made a motion to nominate M. Guadagnino as the chair and L. Haymon as the Vice Chair to one year terms. All agreed. A formal election will be held in January of the following year.
- Quorum/Simple majority vote - M. Guadagnino suggested a quorum number of committee members be established. The group agreed on 3 out of 5 makes a quorum.
- Liaison –Report - tabled to the end of the meeting.

3. Open to the Public

Mr. K. Heffernan (40 Grove Street) opened the session. Mr. K. Heffernan requested to discuss an issue related to the name of the proposed Park. Mr. K. Heffernan stated that he feels the name “Great Oak Park” is not necessarily the best name for the new park. His suggestion that the name be changed back the “original” name of “Pleasureland” be used instead. Mr. K. Heffernan recognized that the original name may create an issue for some individuals as it may bring to mind the violent incidence with took place there before the original “Pleasureland” park was closed circa 1984.

Mr. K. Heffernan went on to say that he has information he obtained from a “Face Book” webpage posting which was partially established to discuss the name of the new park. Mr. K. Heffernan described himself a “newbie” to Face Book but did feel the inflation provided represent the sentiment of the majority of the borough with respect to the Park name. Mr. K. Heffernan went to distribute to some of those in attendance printouts of the responses to his post.

The Committee had a chance to briefly review the information and provide some preliminary comments. There was some spirited debate over some of the items in the postings however, consensus of the Committee was that it was too early in the process to focus on the name of the park and that this could

be better decided in a more scientific and representative poll of the Oakland residents and non-Oakland residents.

Mr. K. Heffernan felt that an immediate name change would be necessary or it will be very difficult for the committee to round up any support or volunteers for the work the committee wishes to accomplish. M. Guadagnino suggested that a full vote/election including in-town as well as out-of-town residents would be a more fair and balanced way to come up with a name. He continued that we could make it fun campaign where people on each of side of the name could write a letter and it will be broadcast equally via internet and paper, possibly including the Suburban and/or the Crossroads newsletter. M. Guadagnino said, there is plenty of time to work on this, as the park is far from opening, let's spend some time working on a fair way to include everyone in this process.

Mr. K. Heffernan did not want to have input from others writing letters, he felt that he could write a letter from each point of view. The committee didn't agree, but said there is time to come up with a fair inclusive way of doing it.

Mr. K. Heffernan suggested that it be put on the ballot referendum for the November election. M. Guadagnino said that would cost a few thousand dollars to be put on the November ballot, and there are no funds to support this. Mr. Heffernan offered to pay for it, Mr. Guadagnino said then we will work to make it happen. Mr. Heffernan then said it was not necessary to be on the November ballot.

Mr. K. Heffernan completed his discussion by telling the Committee that he is very passionate about this issue and will continue to work towards a name change. He also suggested that the Committee's unilateral naming of the park is not fair and should be re-considered immediately. Again the Committee stated that they will work to create a ballot/election including internet and paper ballots. They will work to do something later in the year, as it will take time to make it fair. They welcomed Mr. Heffernan to join in the process as this will take some work.

Ms. L. Schwager (Mayor) joined the discussion and expressed concerned that not all residents use the internet/computers so therefore she suggested perhaps a paper ballot could be attached to the next Crossroads Newsletter regarding the name issues.

Ms. B. Potash (115 Ringwood Ave, Ringwood, NJ) Ms. Potash inquired as to how concerned former residents may be involved in the naming process and would they be allowed to vote?

C. Visconti (Liaison to the Communication Commission including the CrossRoads Newsletter Committee) – provided an overview of how articles are submitted to the CrossRoads, however, it is not clear when the next edition would be completed. Additionally, there are no guarantees that every article submitted will be included in the newsletter especially any article that is considered an editorial. These issues would be determined by the editor.

4. 501C3 Item

M. Guadagnino initiated a discussion concerning fund raising for the Park including in establishing a trust fund for the resources donated. Additionally, M. Guadagnino suggested a 501C3 tax exempt entity be established on behalf of the Park and the fundraising efforts. M. Guadagnino also suggested that some of the recently obtained donations from the sale of the "Pleasureland" T-Shirts be included. Currently about \$700 have been raised in this way. R. Kunze volunteered to find out more information about the trust fund. M. Guadagnino suggested a volunteer with a finance and tax background (i.e. "CPA") be found to help lead these efforts.

5. Priorities

M. Guadagnino again reiterated that one of the highest priorities with respect to developing the Park would be to protect the land and the environment. All regulations and best practices will be followed. L. Haymon provided an overview of some of the issues related to the "C-1" stream buffering and flood plain issues affecting development of the Park. Additionally, any development will also have to consider safety of the residents, users of the park and anything related to emergency responders who may need to enter the Park. M. Guadagnino also mentioned that in the summer months traversing the Park is difficult due to the underbrush, ticks and other potential issues (wildlife?) .

6. Phase I (Park Development Plans)

M. Guadagnino reviewed for the group an overview of the proposed phases of development. Phase I – "Steps needed to get the Park open" - Clearing of brush, opening Doty road entrance, create parking and a road loop, installing a temporary bridge across the stream.

L. Haymon commented that that he would like to engage the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) Division of Land Use to conduct a site visit to identify issues as early as possible so as to minimize impact in the future. L. Haymon also inquired to the Borough Engineer present (Rebecca) in the audience regarding any endangered species identified in the area and to make that request to investigate that issue to NJDEP on behalf of the borough. L. Haymon also discussed the use of a "Constraint Map" to help identify which areas cannot be developed prior to any building. Additionally L. Haymon suggested a permit matrix be developed to ensure all of the correct permits are obtained prior to any work in the Park.

L. Schwager inquired as to the usefulness of reviewing surveys and applications made by the Heritage Hills Corporation when they initiated searches with respect to the property. Additionally L. Schwager inquired as to any discussion with the owners of an adjacent property "Bird Harrison" or if they have been contacted.

R. Kunze mentioned that the EPA Phase I Environmental Assessment has been completed and is available for review and that the Phase II Assessment report is pending.

7. Phase II (Park Development Plans)

M. Guadagnino went on to outline possible Phase II Park development including the Great Lawn, Historical signs, Dog Park, Skate Park, Pump Track, Botanical Gardens and issues related to possible clearing the C-1 stream of debris. Rebecca ? Stated she would contact NJ DEP about those issues

8. Additional Agenda Items;

None

9. Liaison Report –

C. Visconti reiterated that hat this is the first meeting and no reports have been developed das yet.

10. Meeting Schedule

Next Meeting Wednesday, 8/7/13

11. Open to the Public (#2)

None

12. Elections

M. Ostapczuk nominated M. Guadagnino for Chair of the Committee (all agreed). M. Ostapczuk nominated L. Haymon as Vice Chair (all agreed).