



THE FOWWOS NEWS

Newsletter of *FRIENDS OF WEST WINDSOR OPEN SPACE*

Vol. 4, No. 3 • AUTUMN 2003

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\$25,000 TRAIL GRANT AWARDED

Word has been received that the grant application submitted several months ago by the FOWWOS Recreational Trails Committee has been approved. The application was submitted to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for funding available through the National Recreational Trails Program. FOWWOS trustee and committee co-chair Ken Carlson announced that \$25,000 will be provided to develop the initial segment of the Millstone River Trail. This trail will follow the Millstone River on the West Windsor side for a distance of approximately five miles.

The initial segment will lie primarily along the riverside of the former Yeger property east of Millstone Road. This property was recently preserved as open space—partially with funding from FOWWOS. The trail will give area residents a scenic way to enjoy the river and the woods in that part of the township. There will be a small parking area near Millstone Road, as well as a boat launch for access to the river. ☞

ANNUAL MEETING FEBRUARY 3, 2004

The annual meeting of the FOWWOS membership will take place on Tuesday, February 3, 2004, at 8 p.m. in Room A of the Municipal Building. The agenda will include the election of officers, and the appointment of trustees and the FOWWOS legal counsel. The agenda will also include any other business brought before the meeting by the members present. All members are urged to attend this important meeting.

Trustees whose terms expire on February 29, 2004, are Kevin Appelget, Alison Miller, Harley

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WOODBURY MEMORIAL GAZEBO DEDICATED

The gazebo constructed in memory of the late Lisa McNair Woodbury at the Rogers Arboretum has been completed and was dedicated on Saturday, November 29. The beautiful octagonal structure of western red cedar features an engraved bluestone memorial paver and a surrounding landscaped garden. The structure is located on the high ground overlooking the Rogers monument and the 9/11 Memorial.

Lisa McNair Woodbury was a graduate of West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South with the class of 1983, where she was a well-known scholar-athlete. Following her death from cancer in October 2002, her family proposed that the gazebo be constructed in her memory. The Arboretum Committee and FOWWOS helped set up a fund-raising effort to supplement the contributions made by her family.

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The Woodbury Memorial Gazebo



Friends Of West Windsor Open Space

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In Memoriam

Bernt Midland (1927-1998), Founder
Gil Gilmore (1922-1998)
Ron Rogers (1929-1999)

E-mail: ek61@juno.com or FOWWOS@yahoo.com
Web site: www.fowwos.org
Meetings: First Tuesday at
Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

The newsletter *The FOWWOS News* is produced three times a year by Dick Snedeker and Alison Miller, co-editors
FOWWOS is a nonprofit organization incorporated under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION AND ZONING

There has been a concern in West Windsor that the continuing effort to save open space is somehow limiting our ability to develop new commercial tax ratables that would help offset the heavy tax burden on residential properties. However, there is no basis for this concern.

Nearly all of the 1,600+ acres of land that have been preserved to date as open space are zoned for residential use. Only one of the 49 preserved properties is not zoned residential. That is the 213-acre Maneely tract, which is already being developed as Duck Pond Park, a facility that is badly needed in that part of the township. Of the 50 properties that remain unpreserved on the open space candidate list, only two are zoned for nonresidential use. Both of these are small, and located where they are unlikely to be developed for any purpose.

Zoning in West Windsor encompasses three general categories of planned use: residential, commercial/industrial, and educational. The first two are subdivided into numerous, more specific uses such as residence by type and lot size, or business according to kind, such as retail, research and light manufacturing, or office. Open space is not a zoning category.

At the present time, commercial/industrial zones in West Windsor comprise approximately 3,500 acres, while residential zones (less existing parks, including Mercer County Park) comprise approximately 10,000 acres. In the commercial/industrial zones, less than half the available acreage has already been developed, leaving a potential for future development of approximately 2,000 acres, including the Wyeth and Sarnoff properties, as well as others in the Route-1 corridor and along Route 571.

Increasing the proportion of commercial and industrial development in the township is a long-

sought goal. But the success of efforts to reach that goal depends on several factors over which the township has only limited control. In addition to the general climate for new business development, these include desired location and the adequacy of infrastructure, such as roads and sewers. Even the type of soils in a specific area and the subsurface conditions are factors that determine how a site can be zoned and developed.

It has been suggested that some of the remaining unpreserved open space properties might be rezoned for commercial/industrial use to help meet the goal. Few if any of these properties, however, fit the desired criteria for commercial/industrial use. This is also true of the properties that have already been preserved. Most of this land either lies outside the sewered area of the township, or lacks access to adequate and suitable roads. In fact, these are the same reasons that justified the zoning of these properties as they are in the first place.

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NEW "WIDE OPEN SPACES" FUND-RAISER COMING FEBRUARY 7

Plans have been announced for the second annual "Wide Open Spaces" fund-raiser. Conceived and produced by FOWWOS member Trish Miele, this musical festival will take place on Saturday, February 7, 2004, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Education Building of the Dutch Neck Presbyterian Church.

Musicians and groups of all ages will take part in this repeat of last year's successful event. On that occasion twelve groups took part, ranging from bluegrass to traditional Chinese dance to the Community Middle School Jazz Band. It is expected that this year there will be even broader participation. Refreshments will be available.

Further details will be announced as the date approaches. ☺

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

LEAVING FOR OTHER SPACES

I am sorry to report that two of our trustees, Rhea Rogers and George Levin, have resigned. They will both be leaving for warmer places. Rhea and her family have gone to Atlanta, where her husband has taken a new position, and George and his wife Phyllis are moving to Boca Raton, Florida, their part-time winter vacation town for many years. Rhea and George have both left indelible marks on FOWWOS and the preservation of open space in West Windsor. We are all indebted to them for their contributions.

George is a FOWWOS founding member. He was instrumental in the FOWWOS petition drive to get the open space tax referendum on the November 1998 ballot. That referendum passed easily and gave West Windsor the means to preserve more of its open space and thereby reduce future residential development. George also headed the nominating committee, whose responsibility is to propose candidates to fill vacated positions on the FOWWOS board. He also led the effort to recommend improvements in the FOWWOS charter, and made important contributions to the discussion of how the township uses open space tax revenues. George was active in the community in many ways. A retired IBM executive, he helped start the West Windsor Retirees Group, was an officer of the Citizen's Rifle and Revolver Club, and worked for many years as an umpire with local club and school baseball programs.

Rhea, the daughter of a FOWWOS founder—the late Ron Rogers—was born in West Windsor and graduated from West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South. She attended the University of North Carolina and holds a PhD in anthropology. As a FOWWOS trustee she served as assistant secretary and as representative to the Mayor's Open Space Utilization Task Force. Her knowledge of open space issues was extremely valuable in helping shape FOWWOS policy. She was also a member of the West Windsor Shade Tree Committee.

To fill George's position, the trustees have appointed Kevin Appelget, a lifelong West Windsor resident and member of the Environmental Commission and the Shade Tree Committee. He will serve for the remainder of George's term which ends February 29, 2004. He will then be eligible for appointment to a full three-year term ending February 28, 2007. Rhea's position remains vacant, and we are looking for candidates to fill it. On behalf of the FOWWOS trustees, we wish them the best and hope their enthusiasm for saving open space is put to good use down South. ☺

WHAT FOWWOS IS—AND WHAT IT IS NOT

From time to time, the trustees of FOWWOS become aware that some members of the community are either unaware of the FOWWOS objectives or may misunderstand or misconstrue them. Therefore, it is useful to explain what FOWWOS really is, and what it is not.

FOWWOS is a nonprofit organization whose sole reason for being is the preservation of open space in West Windsor Township. The trustees of FOWWOS are very much aware of this and are single-minded in its pursuit. - The three most compelling reasons for the preservation of open space in West Windsor are:

1. As a means to control residential growth and the inevitable tax increases it brings.
2. The preservation of natural resources, without which any type of development would not be sustainable.
3. The maintenance of a desirable quality of life that depends on a variety of open space for its own sake, be it park, open field, forest, or farm.

These reasons are as justifiable now as they have ever been.

To accomplish its mission, the incorporation charter of FOWWOS lists the following objectives:

1. To promote the preservation of open space in West Windsor.
2. To encourage and assist the local government in its open space and conservation programs.
3. To raise funds toward the purchase of open space.
4. To foster the study of natural resource conservation.
5. To encourage farmland preservation.
6. To engage in other charitable and educational activities related to open space conservation that may be appropriate.

The trustees of FOWWOS try very hard to represent the full membership in adhering strictly to these objectives. If FOWWOS were ever found to be doing anything inconsistent with these objectives, its charter would be revoked by the IRS and it would lose its nonprofit status.

With these facts in mind, it is clear what FOWWOS is not and can never be:

1. An advocacy group for any environmental cause except the preservation of open space in West Windsor
2. Except as it may affect the preservation or use of open space, FOWWOS has not and never will take a position on township land use, including planning, zoning, or development.
3. FOWWOS has not and never will take a position on any political issue, local or otherwise.

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Annual Meeting, cont.

Pickens, John Sabino, and Dick Snedeker. Nominations for trustee may be made by the membership at large. Such nominations must be submitted to the FOWWOS nominating committee over the signatures of five members in good standing no later than January 13, 2004, or three weeks prior to the annual meeting. A trustee's term is three years. ☞

Open Space Preservation and Zoning, cont.

Nothing would be gained by changing the zoning of properties that have little potential of ever being developed in the desired way. The best way to achieve a higher proportion of commercial/industrial ratables is to encourage further development of those zones that already exist for that purpose. There is no conflict here with the continued preservation of residentially zoned acreage as open space. ☞

Woodbury Memorial Gazebo, cont.

At the dedication, several members of her family spoke and expressed their gratitude at the completion of the memorial. Her classmate, the Reverend Carla Thomas Royster gave the invocation and spoke of her memories of Lisa. Other speakers were Mayor Shing-Fu Hsueh and FOWWOS President Mike Schuit. The construction project and the dedication program were coordinated by FOWWOS trustee Harley Pickens, who also chairs the Arboretum Committee. ☞

What FOWWOS Is, cont.

We hope these specific aspects of what FOWWOS does and does not do will help resolve any uncertainty on the part of its members and the public at large. If anyone has doubts as to how well FOWWOS adheres to its objectives, we would welcome hearing from them. ☞

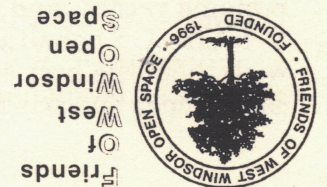
<i>To join FOWWOS</i>		Enclose dues check made out to FOWWOS for one of the following	
Send name and address to:		memberships:	
FOWWOS		Regular (family)	\$25.00 per year
P.O. Box 73		Silver	\$50.00 " "
West Windsor, NJ 08550		Gold	\$75.00 " "
Membership dues and contributions are fully tax deductible.			

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