



THE FOWWOS NEWS

Newsletter of *FRIENDS OF WEST WINDSOR OPEN SPACE*

Vol. 4, No. 1 • WINTER 2003

In this issue: Wyeth Development & Open Space Inventory & Memorial Gazebo at Arboretum & Recreational Trails Grant & President's Message: Preserving a Piece of History & Bylaws Revised

WEST WINDSOR'S OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

The inventory of West Windsor open space parcels continues to be the focus of the community-wide preservation effort that began in 1994. In that year, the 93-acre Grover Farm on Village Road East was acquired with the help of the new one-cent open space tax. Since then, additional open space taxes—one cent in 1995 and five cents in 1998—have enabled the preservation of more than 1400 additional acres. These have been preserved through either direct purchase or the state farmland preservation program.

Purchased property is paid for jointly by the township, the county (15 percent), and the state (50 percent). FOWWOS participates by contrib-

Continued on p. 3

WYETH PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

American Cyanamid—most recently the Wyeth company—owners of the agricultural research facility on 653 acres at the southern end of West Windsor's portion of the Route 1 corridor, has been a mainstay of our tax base (along with Sarnoff at our northern border) since well before the growth spurt of the last twenty years. Now the research facility is closed and Wyeth is working with the Rouse Company to create a program for development of the property. Wyeth's choice of development partner is an interesting one; Rouse is well known for large-scale, mixed-use projects, like Columbia in Maryland, Baltimore's Inner Harbor, and New York's South Street Seaport. Unsurprisingly, Wyeth and Rouse are looking to develop a large, mixed-use project here in West Windsor. They estimate the project will take between 10 and 20 years to complete.

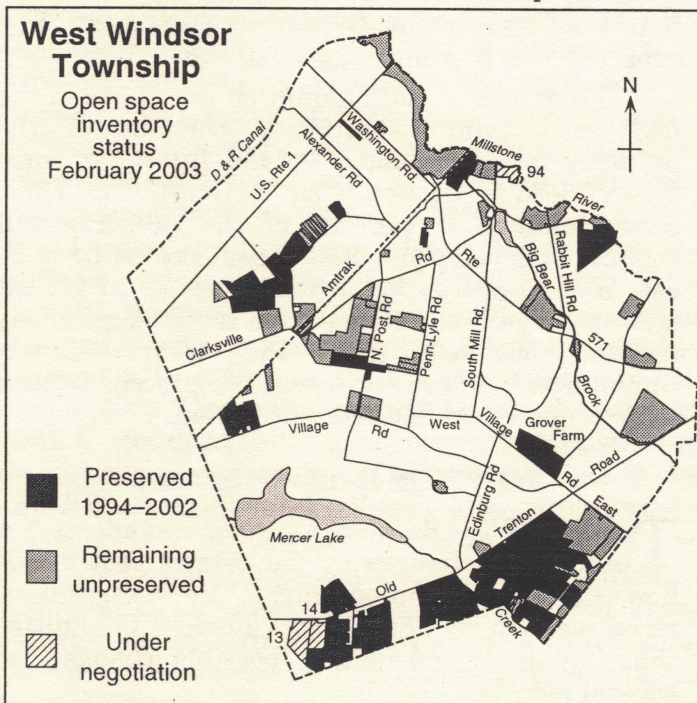
Rouse has done considerable market research and, at several open meetings, has presented the results to the public. Although there is no set plan

Continued on p. 2

MEMORIAL GAZEBO AT ROGERS ARBORETUM

FOWWOS is planning a beautiful new addition to the Ron Rogers Arboretum. An octagonal gazebo will be built on the high ground overlooking the Rogers monument and the 9/11 memorial. The gazebo will be a memorial to Lisa McNair Woodbury, who died last October. Lisa was a graduate of West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South, where she was a well-known scholar-athlete in the early '80's. Her family and friends have donated funds for the structure, and her family will provide more as needed. The McNairs have been promised the donation of

Continued on p. 4



Friends Of West Windsor Open Space

P.O. Box 73 West Windsor New Jersey 08550 (609) 799-4868

Board of Trustees

Mike Schuit, President
Helen Rancan, 1st Vice President
Bob Murray, 2nd Vice President
John Sabino, Treasurer
Harley Pickens, Assistant Treasurer
Elliot Kleiman, Secretary
Rhea Rogers, Assistant Secretary
Robert Kenny, Esq., Counsel

Ted Begun
Ken Carlson
Carole Carson
Beth Feehan
George Levin
Alison Miller
Paul Murphy
Dick Snedeker

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.princetonol.com/groups/fowwos/
Meetings: First and third Tuesdays 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

RECREATIONAL TRAILS GRANT APPLICATION

The Recreational Trails Committee of FOWWOS was formed in October 2001 to serve as an advocacy group for the development of multiuse recreational trails on open space parcels within the township. The committee meets monthly and works closely with the Mayor's Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force and township officials to define potential projects and apply for funding to implement those projects.

The committee recently submitted its first grant application, a request for \$25,000 from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection through the National Recreational Trails Program. The goal stated in the application is to develop an initial segment of the Millstone River Trail, a proposed five-mile trail along the Millstone River on the northern boundary of West Windsor Township. This segment will be located largely on what is identified on the West Windsor open space inventory map as property No. 94 (the Yeger property), a scenic wooded parcel along the south bank of the Millstone across the river from West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North. (See the President's Message and the map on p. 1.) A small parking area just off Millstone Road near the river is also planned.

The purpose of the trail is to provide area residents with a multiuse trail for walking, running, biking, and cross-country skiing, while allowing them to enjoy the scenic beauty of the Millstone River. The trail will also provide access to the river via a boat launch near Millstone Road.

If you are interested in finding out more about the committee, contact either Ken Carlson (kecarlson@comcast.net) or Ken Naglak (naglak@earthlink.net). Feel free to attend the Bicycle/Pedestrian meetings held on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 PM at the Municipal Building. ☺

Wyeth Property Development, cont.

at this point, and there has been no application to the township, they are proposing to build: one million square feet of high end retail (Neiman Marcus, Nordstrom), a first-class restaurant, two-and-a-half million square feet of class A office space, a half million square feet of research space (possibly including what already exists), a 500 room, full-service hotel, 800 units of housing, and facilities for community use.

Present zoning allows a 30-percent floor area ratio (FAR); that is, square footage equal to 30 percent of the 653 acres (8,533,404 square feet) may be built. But the present zoning only allows research, office, or light manufacturing—no retail and no housing. Therefore, the zoning would have to be changed to accommodate such a plan. Wyeth has agreed to reduce the FAR to 21 percent and to a change of uses that would reduce projected peak hour traffic generation by at least 40 percent. The program that is being suggested would do that.

The project would be built on about 386 of the 653 acres, since significant portions of the property have wetlands, upland forest, or some type of deed restriction, such as Greenbelt. Thus, approximately 41 percent of the property will remain undeveloped. Rouse has agreed to dedicate a right-of-way for a future bus rapid transit system. Wyeth and Rouse have received generally positive feedback from the West Windsor community, and are encouraged to proceed to turn their preliminary findings into a plan. ☺

FOWWOS BYLAWS REVISED

The FOWWOS Board of Trustees has adopted a number of changes in the bylaws that define how the organization operates. The changes were recommended by the Bylaws Review Committee that had been considering possible changes for several months.

Continued on p. 4

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
PRESERVING A PIECE OF HISTORY**

You have glanced at this property countless times as you have driven north on Millstone Road from West Windsor into Plainsboro. This is where you cross the Millstone River, the boundary between the two townships. However, you may not have known that the 22-acre undeveloped parcel on your right has both ecological and historical significance.

The parcel, otherwise known as the Yeger property (No. 94 on the map on p. 1), is entirely within the corridor of historically significant land planned for preservation as the "Crossroads of the American Revolution." General Washington, who spent half the Revolutionary War in New Jersey, led his troops across this property. Instead of war, development now threatens this important historical and ecologically significant site.

The parcel contains upland forest, including majestic oaks, abundant wildlife, and wetlands. It is ideal for bird watching, hiking, mountain biking, nature trails, fishing, and canoeing.

Now, with the help of your membership dues and contributions, FOWWOS has joined with our township, county, and state governments and the Delaware and Raritan Greenway to preserve the land where George Washington crossed West Windsor and led his troops to victory. His victory is now repeated in the battle to preserve our open space from development. ☺

WIDE OPEN SPACES FUND-RAISER

On Saturday, February 8th, members of the community were treated to a multicultural, intergenerational concert titled "Wide Open Spaces," that was sponsored to raise funds for and increase awareness of FOWWOS. Trish Miele, a FOWWOS member and resident of West Windsor, conceived and organized the festival and even sang the national anthem at its start.

During the five-hour event, twelve separate groups and individuals performed in the Education Building of Dutch Neck Presbyterian Church. Performances ranged from a bluegrass ensemble to a traditional Chinese dancer to the 7th and 8th Grade Community Middle School Jazz Band. Hot dogs and soda, courtesy of McCaffrey's, were available, as well as cookies baked by FOWWOS members. President Mike Schuit spoke about FOWWOS's goals and accomplishments.

Well over 100 people attended the festival in addition to the many performers from other areas of New Jersey. The event, which was held during the FOWWOS membership renewal drive, was so successful that plans are already under way to repeat it next year. ☺

Open Space Inventory, cont.

uting funds to help offset the township's 35-percent share. The township must put up the whole amount at closing, and then wait for reimbursement of the 65 percent from the county and state. The township raises its share through short-term financing or the sale of bonds, and uses the tax proceeds to retire this indebtedness as the years go by. At least ninety percent of the open space tax proceeds must be used for this purpose. The remainder can be used for development or maintenance of property preserved through the tax.

The map shows the total of 1502 acres that have been preserved to date (58 percent of the inventory), plus the 1073 unpreserved acres that remain in the inventory. The inventory is the list of properties with preservation potential that has been filed with the state. These properties are eligible for state and county reimbursement funds if they are preserved.

In addition to land that has been preserved by the township through its open space program, many additional acres in West Windsor have been preserved through other means. By far the most significant, of course, is Mercer County Park, which occupies approximately 2500 acres in the southwestern corner of the township.

All told, there are 7861 acres of preserved land in the township, or 47 percent of its total area of 16,803 acres. The portion of the township preserved by West Windsor alone is nine percent.

The township continues to negotiate with owners of the remaining inventory properties. One of these is the 22-acre Yeger property, No. 94 on the map, and another is the 80.4-acre Tindall farm on Old Trenton Road, Nos. 13 and 14. ☺

OPEN SPACE UTILIZATION REPORT

The Mayor's Open Space Utilization Task Force (OSUTF) is wrapping up its mission to plan uses for West Windsor's open space for the next six years. Over the past ten months, OSUTF has undertaken three primary tasks: (1) an examination of all open space properties to determine which are suitable for active recreation development (i.e. organized sports) and which are unsuitable due to environmental or other constraints, (2) an analysis of the needs for specific recreation activities, including a wide array of such diverse activities as skate boarding, soccer, hiking trails, equestrian areas, and offleash dog parks, and (3) conceptual development proposals for specific properties that will accommodate all of the recommendations. The OSUTF plans to submit its report by April 1st. FOWWOS trustees Rhea Rogers and Elliot Kleiman are members of the task force. ☺

Memorial Gazebo, cont.

concrete for the gazebo base, which will feature an engraved memorial bluestone paver.

Township landscape architect Dan Dobromilsky, who was the principal designer of the 9/11 memorial, is now working on a plan for the gazebo and surrounding greenery. FOWWOS trustee Harley Pickens, who coordinated the building of the Rogers monument and the 9/11 memorial is doing the same for the Woodbury gazebo. A spring completion date is anticipated. If you wish to contribute, you may send checks to FOWWOS at P.O. Box 73, West Windsor, NJ 08550. Please identify your check as a contribution for the gazebo. ☺

REMINDER: It's not too late to renew your membership! Please continue to help FOWWOS in its important work to preserve our open space. We need you.

FOWWOS Bylaws Revised, cont.

The changes mainly reflect practical aspects of how FOWWOS has done its business in the six years since its incorporation as a nonprofit organization. Initially the FOWWOS bylaws were based on those of similar organizations in the area. The new bylaws are designed to match FOWWOS's specific needs.

A new calendar based on a "membership year" has been established for the annual meeting, the election of officers, and the sending of dues notices. This calendar calls for an annual meeting in February and for dues notices to be sent before February 1 of each year. The conventional fiscal year remains for business matters. In keeping with usual practice for such organizations, the governing board members are now identified as trustees rather than directors. A number of minor changes in language were also made for self-consistency. ☺

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

Printed on recycled paper

To:

Address service requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
PERMIT NO. 246
PRINCETON JCT NJ
08550

