



THE FOWWOS NEWS

Newsletter of *FRIENDS OF WEST WINDSOR OPEN SPACE*

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NEW OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PLANS

Pending formal approval of their applications by the planning board, West Windsor has recently obtained commitments from several landowners and developers to transfer ownership of large portions of their properties to the township as open space in exchange for the development of the remainder with a limited number of residences. Nine properties comprising a total of 238 acres are involved. Of this total, approximately 168 acres will be added to the township's list of over 1600 acres of preserved property. Two additional properties totaling 127 acres are currently under active consideration for purchase in their entirety. The new properties are all on the township's list of open space preservation candidates. (See map, p. 2.)

Property No. 38 (98 acres)

This property on North Post Road will be developed with five new houses on a total of approximately eight acres fronting on North Post Road. The remaining 90 acres will be given to the township. Duck Pond Run traverses a portion of this property, and much of it is forested. It also contains some wetlands. A portion lies within the designated West Windsor Greenbelt.

Property Nos. 63 and 64 (36 acres total)

These properties are located to the south of Clarksville Road and north of the Princeton Chase development. One house will be built on approximately four acres, with access from Spring Hill Drive. The remaining 32 acres will be given to the township. Duck Pond Run traverses these properties, which are also forested and contain wetlands.

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FOWWOS PRESIDENT MIKE SCHUIT RESIGNS

Shortly before the 2006 annual meeting, FOWWOS president Mike Schuit made known his intention to step down as president and resign from the board of trustees. He cited as reasons increased commitments to his job and family. Mr. Schuit, who is a deputy attorney general with the NJ State Department of Law and Public Safety, was only the second president FOWWOS had ever had. He served in that capacity for over 8 years, beginning in 1997 when he succeeded founder and first president Bernt Midland. FOWWOS was founded by Mr. Midland in 1995 and was granted official status as a nonprofit corporation in 1996. At the annual meeting of February 28, 2006, the trustees elected Helen Rancan to succeed Mr. Schuit as president. She had been serving as first vice president since 1998.

During Mr. Schuit's tenure, FOWWOS became widely known as one of the most successful open space preservation organizations in the state. Milestones of his leadership included the initiative and referendum of 1998 that led to an increase in West Windsor's dedicated open space tax, negotiation of the purchase of the Liao-Lin property on North Post Road, and the preservation of the Rogers property in Grovers Mill, which was made possible through his personal efforts at involving the local community and gaining their financial support. His role in the Liao-Lin transaction was important because it established a model for the procedure used in other acquisitions. In this model the owner agrees to sell the property to a government entity or nonprofit at a price below its market value. In return, the owner gains the tax benefit of a charitable contribution and/or a reduction in capital gains tax. ☞



Friends Of West Windsor Open Space

P.O. Box 73 West Windsor New Jersey 08550 (609) 799-8372

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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.

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Latest Open Space Preservation, cont.

Property No. 48 (28 acres)

Located to the west of Penn Lyle Road, this property borders the undeveloped Sunrise Park across the road from Colonial Park. It was once thought to be mostly undevelopable because of its large wetland areas. However, it has since been determined that the drainage system installed by the owner many years ago keeps the property sufficiently dry to permit residential construction. Accordingly, the owner has opted to develop 12 houses on this site. The township will gain a pedestrian access way between Ward Drive and Sunrise Park, but no additional preserved land.

Property Nos. 69, 70, and 71 (28 acres total)

These three properties on the west side of Penn-Lyle Road opposite Woodmere Way will be developed together as one, with a total of 10 houses clustered on approximately 5 acres. After acreage for infrastructure is taken into account, the township will be given about 18 or 19 acres as open space. Much of this acreage lies in the township greenbelt.

Property No. 34 (35 acres)

Located on Route 571 near Rabbit Hill Road, this property will be developed with 17 houses clustered on nine acres. About 20 acres of the remaining area will be given to West Windsor as open space. Much of this acreage also lies in the greenbelt, and includes property on the west side of Big Bear Brook, where the proposed hiking trail will be developed.

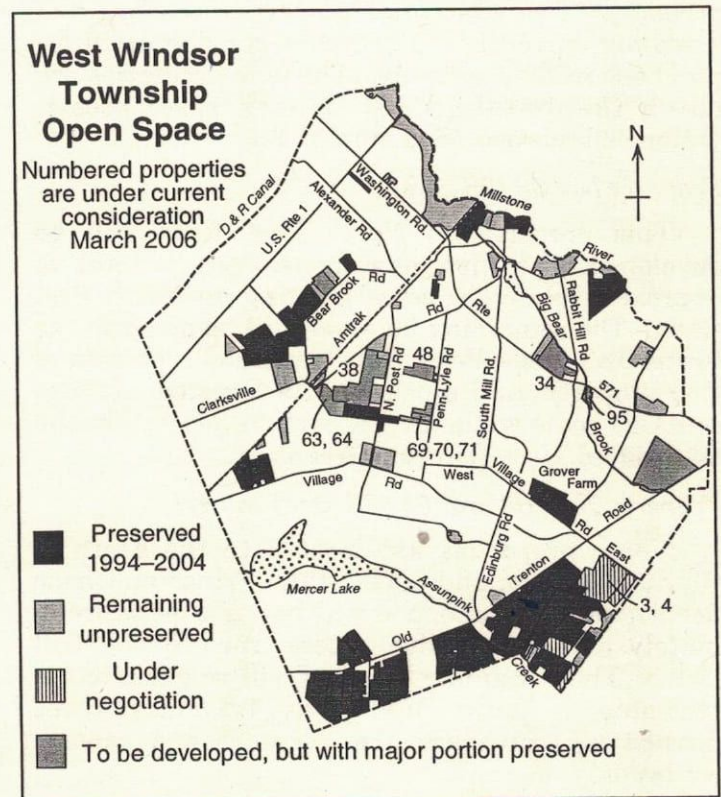
Property 95 (13 acres)

This property is located on the south side of Route 571, east of Lanwin Boulevard. The existing house and one additional building lot will be subdivided from this property, and 6 or 7 acres of the remainder will be open space with an easement giving the township access to Big Bear

Brook. This will allow continuation of the trail on the south side of the road.

Properties 3 and 4 (127 acres total)

Because of their location at the intersection of Village Road East and South Lane, these properties lie outside the sewered area of the township. Therefore, the soil must meet the percolation requirements to support septic systems if they are to be developed for housing. While the owner is having the required tests done, the township is negotiating for the purchase of the entire tract. If successful, 127 acres of open space will be added to the large contiguous area of preserved farmland south of Old Trenton Road.



Have you renewed your membership for 2006?

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"One person can make a difference, and every person should try." John F. Kennedy

FOWWOS' former president, Mike Schuit, not only tried, he succeeded in making a positive and long-lasting difference in our township. FOWWOS' first president, Bernt Midland, had the vision that preservation of open space was not a luxury, but a necessity. It was Mike, however, who took that vision and turned it into a reality. He knows open space preservation and economic growth are not mutually exclusive.

I first met Mike on a cold and rainy day in January 1996. He and Bernt were auctioning off a used station wagon in order to plant seed money for the newly formed Friends of West Windsor Open Space. From those humble beginnings, FOWWOS has evolved into an exceptional story of success, due in no small part to the strong leadership of its second president. Mike possesses that "we can change things here, we can achieve awesome goals, we can be the best" attitude which served us all well.

During Mike's tenure, FOWWOS secured over a million dollars of state funds for the preservation of open space. With those funds, support from Mercer County, and membership dues, FOWWOS contributed to the preservation of over 1400 acres. Mike was the expert in negotiating many deals, from fee-simple purchases, to deed restrictions, to donations.

We on the FOWWOS board will miss Mike's camaraderie. But the citizens of West Windsor will continue to have a true champion, for I am confident that Mike will be one to continue to make a difference.

As a tribute to Mike, I ask West Windsor citizens to renew their dedication for preserving a high quality of life for ourselves and for our children by voicing your support for open space preservation in our township. ☺

GROVERS MILL POND REHABILITATION MAY START THIS YEAR

More detailed plans for the long-awaited rehabilitation of Grovers Mill Pond were revealed last fall by the Army Corps of Engineers, who will be supervising the project. If all goes well, the project may start this year.

The plans call for hydraulic dredging to remove the thick layers of silt that have built up during the 250-plus years since the pond was impounded in the mid-18th century. To save on the expense of transportation to a remote site, the silt will be deposited in low areas of Community

ANNUAL MEETING HELD

The FOWWOS annual meeting was held at town hall on February 28, 2006. As usual, the principal business was the election of trustees and officers for the coming year and the appointment of the FOWWOS attorney. This year, trustees Ted Begun, Elliot Kleiman, Paul Murphy, and Helen Rancan were elected to serve new three-year terms. Attorney Bob Kenny was reappointed to serve for one year.

Because of Mike Schuit's resignation, there are now two vacancies on the FOWWOS board. Filling these with motivated members of the community who demonstrate a willingness to help FOWWOS continue its work will be a goal of the remaining trustees during the coming year.

With the president's seat vacant, First Vice President Helen Rancan was elected to fill it. Helen is an environmental engineer with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, and has been a member of the FOWWOS board since 1996. Other officers elected were Bob Murray, first vice president, and Ken Carlson, second vice president. The remaining officers were unchanged: Elliot Kleiman, secretary, Paul Murphy, assistant secretary, John Sabino, treasurer, and Harley Pickens, assistant treasurer.

Special donations by Mary and Perry Weaver and Long & Foster Real Estate

A highlight of the meeting was the presentation of checks totaling \$5,000 to FOWWOS by Mary and Perry Weaver and Long & Foster Real Estate. Mary Weaver, who was a founding trustee of FOWWOS, made the presentation and explained that the money was to be dedicated to the future development of the Rogers Preserve as a "public-friendly" park. Newly-elected President Helen Rancan expressed FOWWOS' appreciation for the generous donation.

Also at the meeting, the trustees discussed the latest developments in the preservation of additional properties, the implications of the open space tax-reduction referendum of 2005, and the development of the trails at the Rogers Preserve and the new boat launch on the Millstone River. ☺

Park, which adjoins the pond's western shore. Because the silt is now so close to the surface and contains an abundance of nutrients, aquatic plants flourish during warm weather and choke the pond, preventing adequate circulation and seriously degrading the quality of habitat for fish and other aquatic wildlife. When the vegetation dies during the hot weather it emits foul odors over a wide area.

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Grovers Mill Pond, cont.

The ACOE has estimated that the project will cost approximately \$4.6M. Of this, they have already provided \$1M and will seek approval to contribute another \$1.9M, for a total of \$2.9M. The remaining \$1.7M would be supplied by the township. A large portion (\$1.2M) of this amount has been allocated in the township's long-range capital budget for several years. Before the involvement of the ACOE, the township had estimated it would have to spend \$2.5M to complete the job, and planned accordingly. Now, thanks to the ACOE, the township's obligation to the project has been reduced by \$800,000. &

when volunteers help pick up trash in the township and report the time they spend to FOWWOS. This activity has been a popular way for individuals of all ages and groups such as boy and girl scouts to contribute to the community. Information and forms are available at town hall or from FOWWOS at www.fowwos.org.

Arbor Day. This year, West Windsor Township will celebrate Arbor Day on Saturday, April 27 at 10 a.m. at the Ron Rogers Arboretum. In case of rain, the location will be the Senior Center. Celebration of Arbor Day helps West Windsor qualify for the designation Tree City USA, conferred by the National Arbor Day Foundation.

UNDERSTORIES

Clean Streets Program. With warmer weather approaching, it is time to consider taking part in the Clean Streets Program. This state-sponsored program provides cash payments to FOWWOS

Farmers' Market. The annual West Windsor Farmers' Market will open on May 20. The market runs each Saturday through October from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the parking lot off Vaughn Drive in Princeton Junction.

To join FOWWOS

Send name and address to:

FOWWOS
P.O. Box 73
West Windsor, NJ 08550

Enclose dues check made out to FOWWOS for one of the following memberships:

Regular (family)	\$25.00 per year
Silver	\$50.00 " "
Gold	\$75.00 " "

Membership dues and contributions are fully tax deductible.

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