

Friends of Worcester meeting minutes Meeting date: October 12, 2005

Present: Kim David, Rob Hayes, Barbara McMonagle, Wini Hayes, Charlie Lowe, Bill Fox, Dave Cardy, Charley Muir, Doug Rotondo, Jeannie Stiegerwalt, Marie Amato, Susan Caughlan

The minutes of the September meeting were approved as written and will be posted on the FOW website, fiendsofworcester.org.

Treasurer's Report. There was discussion on whether to adopt the budget with three issues of the newsletter or only two. Charley noted that newsletters take a lot of time and effort to put together, and that it might be difficult to find enough advertisers for three issues a year. We are able to cover a lot of issues with two newsletters, especially when they are 8 pages. It was decided to adopt a budget for 2006 with two newsletters.

President's Report. Kim David reported on a recent meeting of the Presidents and Vice Presidents of FOW and the Worcester Historical Society to discuss areas of common interest, such as a historic preservation ordinance and demolition permit requirements.

Contribution and Support. Barbara McMonagle noted it would be very helpful if people notify FOW when they change their e-mail address, so they can continue to receive minutes and other FOW news via e-mail. Please notify us at info@friendsofworcester.org.

Fundraising/Hospitality. We discussed when to target our 2006 fundraising letter. Until last year, we had been mailing it to our supporters in the fall. However, last year it was not mailed until January, and we had a very strong response. It was agreed to send our next fundraising letter in January 2006.

Township Reports.

Board of Supervisors. Paul Zeigler has replaced Harry Miller as Worcester's representative to the North Penn Water Authority Board. It was noted that the installation of water lines throughout the township will facilitate more development. The group felt it was important to communicate to the new representative FOW's concerns regarding the expansion of public water service in the township.

Planning Commission. The Growing Greener ordinances drafted by the PC are scheduled be presented to residents at the BOS public meeting on November 16. We discussed how best to show FOW's support for these ordinances.

Zoning Hearing Board. We discussed a request to waive setback requirements to allow a resident to purchase an additional lot and re-subdivide to yield three lots instead of the two permitted under our ordinances. It was noted that there is no hardship in this type of case because the applicant's own residence is not affected, and he has the choice to purchase the additional lot or not. It was noted that an additional lot is a detriment, not a benefit, to the township. FOW will send a letter to the BOS stating our position that this type of variance should not be granted.

Joint Meeting. The next Joint Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 5.

Newsletter. We have received good support for the newsletter from our advertisers, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Marie Amato. The fall newsletter is scheduled to be mailed the last week in October. Charley Muir thanked everyone who contributed articles in such a timely manner. He briefly explained how newsletter articles are edited and how the entire newsletter is compiled. The printer now does everything except the labels, which we will do on Sunday, Oct 23, from 1 to 3 p.m. at Bean Road Nursery.

Outreach. We decided to hold a fall outreach meeting for township residents, using the powerpoint presentation that was given this spring at Meadowood. Susan will make any necessary updates to the presentation. The presentation is scheduled for Monday, Nov 14, at 7:30 p.m. at Worcester Community Hall. It will be announced in the newsletter and also on a signboard in front of the Hall. We discussed whether to hand out flyers at the polls to announce the meeting.

We discussed how to structure a web-based survey. Some suggested categories for questions were: how we communicate; our projects; the importance of open space; historic preservation; and an open space bond referendum. The Outreach Committee will develop additional categories that might be included on a survey.

Website Development. The “Township Maps” and “About FOW” pages have been completed and will be posted to the website. Some modifications to the “About FOW” page were discussed, and these will be completed before the page is posted. Both of these new pages are featured in a newsletter article. It was noted that a counter on the website would allow us to see whether there is a lot of interest in the new pages. Dave reported that the website does have a counter.

Current issues.

Historic Protection Ordinance. In September, Susan attended a one-day workshop sponsored by the Pennsylvania Historic & Museum Commission on historic protection ordinances. We now have a lot of information on how other communities have started their historic review commissions and written historic protection ordinances. It was noted that of particular importance is an ordinance that would require review (including public notice) before a demolition permit for a historic structure is granted.

Administrative Assistant’s Report: This month the “Township Maps” and “About FOW” web pages were completed. Bill Fox was instrumental in preparing the Township Maps pages for the website. Next will be a page on current land developments, including information on their status.

New Business

A photographer who lives at Meadowood has offered to photograph some of our events for us. Bill Fox mentioned that Meadowood has a photographers’ club that might be interested in doing this as well. We discussed our photo wish list: the Methacton Oak in each season, our holiday potluck gathering, and our outreach presentation on November 14.

FOW 2005 meeting dates and events:

Meetings –Wednesday, November 9, and Wednesday, January 11. Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. at Bean Road Nursery (corner of Bean & Whitehall Rds.)

Holiday Potluck – Thursday, December 29, from 5 to 10 p.m. at the Hayes’, 3033 Fisher Rd. Please RSVP by December 27 to 610-584-0371.