

MINUTES OF THE FOREST PRESERVE ADVISORY BOARD HELD
THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2010 AT THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE
PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICES

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chair Ginny Mudrock at 7:02 p.m.

PRESENT were Chair Mudrock and Board members Kastner, Noll, Bucco, Murray, Elliott, Hoffmeister, Snyder and Gregersen.

ALSO PRESENT was Mayor Judith Davis and Planning and Community Development Director Celia Craze.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: On a motion by Ms. Hoffmeister and seconded by Ms. Kastner the agenda was approved with the addition of the following items: scheduling of tour of preserve with Lesley Riddle, encroachment of compost/yard waste yard at Northway, and naming of the preserve.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: On a motion by Ms. Elliott and seconded by Ms. Bucco the minutes of the meeting of January 21, 2010 were approved with corrections.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a) REVIEW OF WORK SESSION WITH CITY COUNCIL – Chair Mudrock described the recent City Council work session with the advisory board and committee chairs, which she attended. She had described for Council the accomplishments of the FPAB over the past year, which included consulting on the removal the invasive “Tree of Heaven” on Northway, coordinating use of trails for the pumpkin walk and the meeting with the GHI Woodlands Committee. She showed the new form that the Council will be using to monitor communication with the boards and committees. She also stated that she had learned that Mayor Davis will be the City Council liaison to FPAB.
- b) INTRODUCTION OF MAYOR DAVIS AS FPAB LIAISON – Mayor Davis was introduced as the City Council liaison to the FPAB. Chair Mudrock asked Mayor Davis to describe her role as the liaison. The Mayor stated that she was very busy with her Council work, and she would attend FPAB meetings as frequently as possible. She said that she was available to the FPAB for questions and to discuss new ideas. She said that she would remain as the FPAB liaison for the entirety of

her current term in office. Chair Mudrock stated she was not aware of the Council Action Request (CAR) form and the fact that the FPAB had been asked by the Council to report on the name the preserve issue.

- c) DEVELOPMENT OF WORK PROGRAM - The work program for the FPAB, listed in priority order was decided as follows:
1. Name the preserve
 2. Review proposed language for Forest Preserve regulatory sign
 3. Cost estimates and design for Forest Preserve identification sign
 4. Naming/designation of Forest Preserve subdivisions
 5. Draft educational brochure – usage, do's and don'ts, map, etc...
 6. Review management and maintenance guidelines, paying particular attention to wording of the fire policy, policy for treatment/management of invasive species
 7. Pumpkin Walk oversight and coordination
 8. Review of the Prince George's County Landscape manual revisions
 9. Draft and review the annual report

- d) DISCUSSION OF REVISIONS TO DUMPING REGULATIONS – Ms. Craze outlined some deficiencies with the current city dumping and littering ordinance, the chief of which is the low amount of the fine. The Board exchanged some brief thoughts and suggestions for strengthening the current regulations, and this item will be placed on the next agenda for further discussion.

- e) SCHEDULING OF PRESERVE TOUR WITH LESLEY RIDDLE - Ms. Riddle had give three possible Saturdays when she could tour the preserve with the FPAB – April 17, May 8 and May 15.

Mr. Murray noted that he will be doing 4-5 hour walks through the preserve on Sundays starting in April. He noted a particular concern with the loss of bio-diverse areas, such as on Blueberry Hills. It was agreed that these concerns should definitely be brought to the attention of Ms. Riddle.

Ms. Snyder also asked about the wild raspberries which used to grown along Northway. Staff was to consult with Ms. Riddle on this subject.

The members asked staff to confirm April 17 as the preferred date.

- f) ENCROACHMENT OF COMPOST/YARD WASTE YARD AT NORTHWAY – Ms. Craze advised the FPAB that following the concerns expressed by Ms. Snyder at the last meeting about the mulch piles within the compost/yard waste yard being pushed into the preserve, that she and Ms. Riddle inspected the area and observed that the fence around the compost yard had been breached by mulch

piles, and the mulch piles now encroached into the preserve. Ms. Craze further explained that Ms. Riddle had immediately started having the mulch piles pulled away from the preserve, and was having the fence restored. Ms. Riddle also planned to speak with the appropriate personnel to ensure that they understood that there could be no dumping or storage of yard waste outside the confines of the compost/yard waste yard.

Ms. Kastner expressed appreciation to the staff for their efforts to resolve the current incident, but noted that this was the second time that Public Works had caused the compost/yard waste area to extend into the preserve. She stated she believed that city staff needed to be aware of the forest preserve and its protections, and that staff must be mindful to protect the preserve from encroachment, as had just been observed.

The Board asked Ms. Craze to draft a friendly petition which could be presented to Council which would communicate the Board's concerns. This petition would be presented to the City Council at the next Council meeting.

Ms. Snyder asked about other areas at Northway where materials were being stockpiled, such as the asphalt millings stockpile. She also asked about a fenced area within which some pipes were being stored. Mayor Davis responded that sometimes it is necessary to store materials temporarily, which is acceptable as long as there is not encroachment into the preserve. Ms. Craze said she would check and advise.

Ms. Elliott expressed concern about individuals driving vehicles onto Observatory Hill and the possibility this could cause vibrations which could damage the mounting piers for the telescopes. Ms. Craze said she would check and advise.

Mayor Davis mentioned a concern expressed to her about shading of the community gardens by shade trees adjacent to the gardens but within the preserve. Ms. Gregersen made reference to the section in the Management and Maintenance Guidelines which allowed for pruning of trees within the preserve and adjacent to the community gardens to maintain the clear storey to the gardens.

- g) NAMING OF PRESERVE – Chair Mudrock questioned what was intended to be named. Mayor Davis stated that it was never the intention of the City Council, when they established the forest preserve regulations and policies that “forest preserve” would become the formal name. Ms. Craze explained that at the time the Committee to Save the

Greenbelt, who initiated the naming of the forest preserve request, presented their recommendations, it was their intent that the name would be applied to the wooded areas now designated the North and the South Preserve.

The Board consulted minutes and notes from previous meetings and noted that preference had been expressed by Board members for three possible names – Forest Preserve of Greenbelt, Greenbelt Forest Preserve and the Great North Woods. Mr. Murray advised that the Committee to Save the Green Belt had preferred Greenbelt Forest Preserve as the name. There was a general discussion among the members regarding personal preferences of the names.

Ms. Gregersen stated her belief that Greenbelt Forest Preserve was not necessarily a name but a technical designation, and suggested that “A Greenbelt Forest Preserve” be used in the titling of any forest preserve area, with an appropriate, distinct name for individual forest preserve areas, parcels or stands. Chair Mudrock agreed that “Greenbelt Forest Preserve” needed to be used in any additional naming, because it is an important distinction. On a motion by Mr. Noll and seconded by Ms. Kastner, the Board voted to support the naming of preserve parcels “Greenbelt Forest Preserve” on a vote of 5-4.

There was some additional discussion about using sub names as additional designators for the preserve. These sub names could describe the general area of the preserve, trail heads, entrances or other distinguishing features. Ms. Snyder made a motion to reconsider the previous vote to support “Greenbelt Forest Preserve” so that the original motion might be amended to include a provision for sub names. The motion died for lack of a second.

Ms. Elliott suggested that communication of the Board's recommendation be sent to Council and that consideration of possible sub names could be brought up during a future FPAB meeting.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, April 20, 2010 at 7 p.m.

NEXT AGENDA: Items for the next agenda include introduction by newly appointed member Joe Murray, items 2 and 3 from the work program priority list, and consideration of revisions to dumping regulations.

There being no other business, on a motion by Ms. Kastner seconded by Ms. Bucco, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Celia W. Craze
Director

These minutes were approved by a vote 6-0.

APPROVED