

**TOWN OF GLEN ECHO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
September 10, 2007**

Attendance: Debbie Beers, Mayor
Nancy Long, Councilmember
Eve Arber, Councilmember
Robin Kogelnik, Councilmember
Cathie Polak, Clerk-Treasurer

Visitors: Kym Elder, NPS, Site Manager at GEP/CBNHS
John Dillow, Living Classrooms
Rex Rhein, Resident
Eleanor Balaban, Resident
Willem Polak, Resident
Bill Turque, Echo Reporter
Deborah Lange, Resident

Mayor Beers opened the meeting at 8:02.

GLEN ECHO PARK REPORT

Ms. Elder reported that the Minnehaha Creek bridge repair is under way. All paths and trails in the Minnehaha natural area are temporarily closed during construction; the bridge and path into the Park remain open. The work should be completed by the end of November.

The Arcade renovations for Adventure Theatre are finished; Adventure Theatre hopes to be operating from the Arcade shortly. Other Arcade renovations continue for the Glass Blowing Studio. Yurt roof stabilization is complete on one of the smaller yurts. The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture (GEPPAC) will soon issue an RFP for potential artists to occupy this yurt.

Phase V of the rehabilitation work will include the Crystal Pool façade, the Caretaker's Cottage and adjacent retaining wall, and the first aid building. The final design and fabrication of a maintenance facility still waits for funding; the design work is 60% complete.

Mayor Beers asked when all the renovations and construction in GEP will be completed, explaining that plans for a major repair of Town streets are being made. Council would like a projected date to schedule street repairs on Tulane, Oberlin, and Bowdoin Avenues. Ms. Elder said that she is unsure of an estimated date. GEP is in the last phase of the project but, due to budget constraints, is still waiting for money from the NPS. Ms. Elder has a meeting with the superintendant on Monday to discuss funding. Some of the smaller contracts will go forward until further funding is available. Most of the work remaining will require heavy equipment to complete the projects. An additional \$2.1 million is needed; \$750k each from federal, state and county funding.

When asked about acquisition of the trolley right-of-way, Ms. Eder said the NPS “is close to having a deed in our hands.” The Park should be releasing a press release soon. They will acquire the trolley right-of-way in Glen Echo from the South side of Oxford Road to Oberlin Avenue. There are still issues with bus turnarounds and bike path to be addressed.

Upcoming events:

- The annual Fall Lamp lighting tour at the Clara Barton National Historic Site (CBNHS) is next weekend with a new art show featuring work by Clara Barton.
- The carousel will finish its 2007 season on Sunday, September 30th.
- GEPPAC is helping to raise funds so that NPS can proceed with the design and fabrication of the Candy Corner, in which a Civil Rights exhibit is planned. The NPS will meet with the Harper’s Ferry design center for guidance on the development of a NPS approved exhibit.

There was a large but comfortable turnout for a very successful Labor Day Art Show weekend. There was discussion about the number of recurring events that have outgrown the parking lot capacity. The NPS will have a ranger assisting with parking and some traffic control, but the NPS will not commit to managing traffic violators. When asked about the NPS response to the Oxford Road ownership issue, Ms. Elder said the Superintendent has been in touch with the solicitor’s office; there should be a response by the end of September.

Kudos were expressed to Councilmember Long from Mayor Beers and Kym Elder for all her work on the annual Labor Day Art Show.

DISCOVERY CREEK/LIVING CLASSROOMS

John Dillow, Executive Director of Living Classrooms (LC) for 14 years, addressed Council on the acquisition and plans for Discovery Creek (DC). LC has existed for 20 years, based in Baltimore, working with charter schools and workforce development programs with the underemployed, to increase educational opportunities. He explained that the acquisition of DC meets strategic planning goals and is complementary to LC. Mr. Dillow explained that Living Classrooms was approached to partner with Discovery Creek when the DC Director retired. They entered into a short-term management agreement with DC as “Living Classrooms of the National Capital Region,” which is leading to the official acquisition of DC.

Mayor Beers explained the Town’s concerns about expansion in GEP and asked Mr. Dillow to share the development plans with Council. He said that he would and further explained that LC focus will be on running DC more efficiently and effectively. Councilmember Long asked if LC plans to expand to the Crystal Pool area and Caretakers Cottage; Mr. Dillow said there are not current plans for expansion in the Park.

He summarized LC:

- The name will stay, Discovery Creek is a very recognized name in the Washington, D.C. area;
- LC was started by a teacher and is a hands-on learning program;

- LC does not currently plan to proceed with the Crystal Pool project as originally envisioned by Discovery Creek;
- An agreement to continue programs in GEP has not been worked out; DC's agreement is with NPS, but LC has long standing relationships with NPS due to several LC programs in Baltimore;
- LC will be moving the office operations to their existing location near Washington's new stadium and the Navy Yard, where the waterfront campus will be built;
- Annie Hansen will remain as Director of Discovery Creek;
- Birthday parties will continue;
- Funding: 50-60% comes from fee for service work (program fees), workforce development programs run for businesses, etc. LC is not as dependent on fund raising as DC (25% comes from grant programs, and the balance from donations).

Councilmember Long asked if DC could have open hours for the general public, noting that it is the first and very attractive area Park visitors see after crossing the bridge when entering the Park. Mr. Dillow said that LC wants to make the DC space more accessible to the public.

Councilmember Long later added that the Town needs to be aware about what goes on in the Park and follow developing plans. GEPPAC's mission is to raise funds; further development at the Park and increased visitation would have an adverse impact on the Town, but would provide additional revenue to GEPPAC. The mission of the NPS is to provide stewardship of public land and properties, and to protect the public interest. (At GEP, the land, buildings and carousel are owned by NPS.)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion 2007-19 to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2007, Town Council meeting, as amended:

1. page 1:

- Pre-construction discussion is ongoing with the Federal Highways to discuss the Minnehaha Bridge stabilization project.
- Design and fabrication of the maintenance facility is still on hold
- There is a new textile artist in the Yellow Barn
- Chimney was removed from the rear of the caretaker's cottage (the chimney was not part of the collage structure) — masonry work will soon begin.
- ~~Park is taking more ownership with the buildings — which is a shift from collaboration with the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture (GEPPAC). Glass blowing is unique — codes come into question with NPS. Using a fire engineering report to determine location for glass blowing work.~~
- GEPPAC and NPS are now working together on the rehabilitation of the yurts — which were not part of the ~~cooperative agreement~~ construction agreement with Montgomery County. The county will continue to bear the costs — NPS will do the permitting and inspecting.
- Clara Barton annual lamp lighting September 15th with an open house and an art show — particularly featuring ~~looking for~~ artwork related to and by Clara Barton

- Any information on the Federal part of the funding? “Congress is at recess and has not decided on the funding. The House had approved the initial \$500750K, so we’re optimistic that it will go through.”

2. page 2:

- other agreements ~~partnerships~~ are with GEPPAC and Park cooperators

3. page 3:

~~VERIZON FIOS INSTALLATION PERMIT~~

~~Mayor Beers was disheartened by the length of discussion of this issue at the last Council meeting and the tendency to over-regulate by the town council. This particular service is being done on an individual basis. “We’re being unreasonable. We can take action if they don’t keep their word to restore the streets within the agreed upon time frame. This is a simple thing, it is not unique to Glen Echo. It is the same for all utilities. It shouldn’t be an issue. We’re making life more difficult for people unnecessarily.”~~

Motion passed as amended.

STREET REPAIR PROJECT

Mayor Beers reported that she met with Councilmember Kogelnik to develop a strategic plan for the street repair project, directed toward a finalized award in April 2008. Council appeared to be in favor of this approach.

C/T Polak reported that E.E. Lyons may be in town to complete the emergency repairs approved at the August 2007 council meeting as early as this week, weather permitting. C/T Polak will let the Park know as soon as a definite date is available

TOWN PARK LANDSCAPE

Councilmember Long reported that the Trace Company will extend their proposal for as long as necessary. A meeting was held with Mr. Rob Petersen of the John Shorb Company, who will provide a proposal to the Town by September 17th. Councilmember Long said a meeting with Mark Wilner is contemplated. C/T Polak inquired about if there are plans to include stone paths; the Town may be required to keep “Shirley’s Park” green space as designated by the terms of her donation. Councilmember Kogelnik asked if Council is seeking proposals from Chapel Valley Landscapers or Hughes Landscaping; Councilmember Long is not seeking their proposals at this time. She commented that Chapel Valley has not done a very good job on our public spaces, in her opinion.

TOWN HALL USE

Debbie Lange asked to use the town hall on Sunday, December 2, 2007, for a dance instructor to hold a workshop; the hall is booked and unavailable on that date. Ms. Lange asked why a non-resident was denied use after using the Town Hall for two seasons. Councilmember Long explained that the group Ms. Lange referred to was permitted use as a favor to GEPPAC when the Stone Tower was closed for rehabilitation after the class had been advertised at that location and there was no other option in the Park. (In both cases, the use was granted to GEPPAC, not to the individual instructor.)

Mayor Beers also explained that Council discourages repeat users for non-residents, noting that overflow parking is a problem for residents living near the Town Hall, as well as wear and tear on the space.

The holiday pancake breakfast will be December 15, 2007, from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

A Hungarian music/dance event is up scheduled for September 18. The fee is \$18.00 for non-residents and residents alike. (This is a resident request, but all arrangements were made by the World Music Folklife Center.)

Councilmember Long presented a request from a Bannockburn resident for a dance event on September 23, 2007, from 11 – 5. This is a two-day event, with the first day held at GEP. Participants will park in GEP; the performance is free to Town residents.

MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE (MML)

No news reported; there is an upcoming meeting on September 20th.

ADDITION TO THE AGENDA

1. Tree removal. The Zeidenberg's requested permission to trim a Linden tree and remove a Box Elder tree. Council requested more information on when the work will be done on the Linden tree because of potential traffic problems during the work. C/T Polak will coordinate with the resident.

2. 2010 Census. C/T Polak reported that the Town is receiving information on the 2010 census. She will be attending a workshop in October; Councilmember Arber volunteered to attend the workshop as well.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30.