

ST. MARGARET'S COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting

March 8, 2010 (rescheduled)

Members present: Chairwoman Paula Schoonmaker, Rosemarie Zengen, Linda Keeling, Amy Dubin

Advisors: Doug Strawinski, John Kuhn

Councilman Harry Colgan, Secretary Susan Ellis

Guest: James Cadorette, arborist

Chairwoman Paula Schoonmaker called the meeting to order at 4:05 P.M. Paula noted that Supervisor Sue Crane commented on the February minutes that the Committee should confirm that any donations to the St. Margaret's projects are tax deductible. The minutes were approved with a motion made by Linda Keeling and seconded by Rosemarie Zengen. Rosemarie noted that David Seton, an architect and engineer has expressed interest in the vacant position on St. Margaret's Committee. He needs to submit a letter of interest to the Town Board.

LANDSCAPE INVENTORY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Chairwoman Paula Schoonmaker introduced James Cadorette, a certified arborist, who is working towards becoming a registered consulting arborist. James explained that he must submit three landscape reports, and is offering to inventory the significant trees at St. Margaret's and make recommendations for their care. He noted that this would be his third report, and that the site would not be specifically identified.

Linda Keeling asked about a map of the site's landscape and whether or not it would include all of the trees, even those that would be removed, to show the site as it exists. James said that he had planned to map only the trees to be preserved. John Kuhn felt that identifying all the trees that are dangerous and need to be removed would be adequate; he also thought that mapping every single tree could create a problem. Paula Schoonmaker said that she would check if the State must approve the removal of trees less than 4" in diameter. Rosemarie Zengen agreed that trying to do all trees was too much, and asked if that would cause limitations on the Committee's proposals if it applied for other grants for landscape work.

Linda Keeling suggested that there should be a proposed plan for planting in the future. That has not been done yet, but James Cadorette could submit a proposal for work on a plan. Paula Schoonmaker noted that she is first interested in recommendations for care of the existing trees, and then she is looking for another grant for a landscaping plan. John Kuhn added that it would be better to have a list of trees recommended to keep and how many to remove. Assemblyman Marc Molinaro has suggested that marking trees would bring an issue of liability.

Doug Strawinski asked James Cadorette whether or not the recommendations would include suggestions about pruning, insect control and fertilization. James answered that his site evaluation would include the impact of work (driveway, parking, etc.) on the site and the growth of trees, as well as potential added shrubs. Linda Keeling asked how long the project would take; James answered that he expected to spend 40 – 100 hours of work on the report.

John Kuhn said that two willows and a split catalpa are scheduled to be removed. Amy noted that the site must have a tree buffer maintained on the east side. John Kuhn added that if there is a plan for a parking lot, the Committee needs to determine what other trees will have to be removed. James Cadorette asked about the pine tree by the garage, and whether or not the garage will be removed; he noted that the pine tree is an important tree for the site. James added that of all the trees on the south side, about 30 trees are of significant size and value. On the east side, he said that several trees are salvageable, but are not of much screening value.

Committee members had other questions. Amy Dubin asked if the proposed plan would consider deer proof specimens and what impacts might occur from the juxtaposition of species of trees. John Kuhn asked about the issue of salt effects from Route 9. Rosemary Zengen asked how long it would take James Cadorette to complete the report; he estimated about 1½ months. Committee members questioned why Hannaford did not plant all their screening trees on the upper portion of their property along the parking lot; Amy Dubin noted that at the time, Hannaford's property included the St. Margaret's parcel.

John Kuhn asked James Cadorette to walk the St. Margaret's site with Committee members to confirm plans for removal of trees, before work is done at the end of March. John asked how to get rid of ailanthus trees, noting that they had treated stumps and roots with Roundup three times, and still had regrowth. James said that he would recommend complete removal of ailanthus trees, as they are invasive and of little value. He added that Roundup is okay, but not the most effective herbicide. However, any other herbicides would require hiring a certified applicator.

Paula Schoonmaker thanked James Cadorette for offering to do an analysis and report of the landscape and spending time with the Committee discussing the proposal. She added that it will be exciting to move forward with it.

NEW YORK STATE ENERGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (NYSERDA) GRANT AND ENERGY AUDIT:

Paula Schoonmaker reported that NYSERDA has given an energy audit report with an assessment, recommendations and cost estimates with payback time for the St. Margaret's building. Among the items included for grant consideration are ceiling insulation, wall insulation, window reglazing, compact fluorescent light installation, room light sensors, a new oil furnace and a new water heater. There was a question of a cost share for the grant. If there is a grant awarded, The Town Board has authorized a contribution of about \$5,900 for the \$50,000 grant. John Kuhn added that he has wanted to install a furnace that uses propane instead of fuel oil; Linda Keeling said that it could be done if it is within the cost range.

PRESERVATION ARCHITECT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:

Paula Schoonmaker reported that the RFP was put out and advertised. The Town Board made a motion for a second day of advertising. On Wednesday, March 3, there was a site visit for architects. Six architects attended for an hour tour and discussion of the site. The deadline for submission of applications is March 17, 2010.

ROTARY MEETING: Paula Schoonmaker reported that she was asked by Sue McCann to speak to the Rotary about the St. Margaret's proposals. She did, and the group seemed interested.

EARTH DAY: Paula received an e-mail from Brenda Cagle of the Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) asking if St. Margaret's Committee would share a space with the CAC and other committees at the Fairgrounds for Earth Day. The cost of the space would be \$200, to be split. The Committee discussed the idea and decided that any display or project should be local, and not so costly. The Committee preferred the idea of concentrating on plans for Hardscrabble Day in September. Councilman Harry Colgan suggested arranging for a wagon tour to bring Hardscrabble Day visitors to St. Margaret's, or perhaps borrowing an electric golf cart from Bard College. The Committee agreed that for Hardscrabble Day, St. Margaret's Committee should have a small space for display and fundraising near the CAC and Tree Committee tables, and provide a wagon ride to St. Margaret's for a tour.

The Committee discussed ideas for fundraising, such as shutters and landscaping. Amy Dubin suggested landscaping would emphasize the Southern Gateway, which would be trendy and catchy. Amy also suggested that a State Historical Marker for St. Margaret's would be a good focus and reachable goal for a fundraiser. John Kuhn noted that he had researched them and learned that they cost about \$800. Paula Schoonmaker asked Committee members to write down other ideas for Hardscrabble Day. Rosemarie Zengen and Amy Dubin will work on the details.

LAWN WORK: Amy Dubin asked what is planned for the lawn area at St. Margaret's. Doug Strawinski said that as soon as it was dry enough it would be worked on. Doug added that the Highway Department had offered to donate sand sweepings from the streets. James Cadorette confirmed that the salt content from deicing has been leached out of road sands, and would be minimal, but cautioned that there might be other contaminants, such as oil and heavy metals. Norman Greig had offered about 50 yards of top soil, but noted that it has baler twine mixed in it. James said that could be removed with a York rake. He suggested that the Committee look at the offered top soil. Doug Strawinski will pursue it.

Amy asked if the area would be grass lawn or other ground cover. John Kuhn and Doug Strawinski said that the first step simply would be to establish a lawn, but that it wouldn't be done by Apple Blossom Day. They also noted that Bucky Coon has offered base soil with some top cover. Rosemarie Zengen said that the Committee should have an okay from a landscaper before making the decision. Cooperative Extension might test any of the proposed soils.

STATIONERY/CARDS: Rosemarie Zengen presented the information she has for printing three sizes of cards with the St. Margaret's logo and requests for donations. The large size would cost \$0.44 to mail and \$99.00 per 500 to print. The smaller sizes would be \$49.50 per 500 or \$89.00 per 1000. Amy Dubin suggested that most people don't want more extraneous paper and perhaps the Committee shouldn't spend the money. However, other members felt that for some occasions, such as a Hardscrabble Day display, people might take them home as reminders.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 P.M.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, March 23, 2010 at 4:00 P.M. at Town Hall

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Ellis, Secretary