

16 Environmentalists Endorse FASNY Conservancy & School Complex as Best Use

Date: Thursday, September 13 @ 12:56:23 EDT

Topic: Community

WPCNR SOUTH END TIMES. By John F. Bailey. September 13, 2012 UPDATED 5:17 P.M. E.D.T.:

The French American School of New York announced the support of 16 environmental organizations for their Greens to Greens Conservancy and proposed new campus for their school at old Ridgeway Country Club



Mischa Zabotin, Chairman of the French American School of New York, in front of blow-up of a letter 16 environmentalists sent on their own and not asked by FASNY

to do so, to the Mayor announcing their support for the FASNY project campus and Greens to Greens Conservancy now under review by the City.



Five of 16 environmental leaders looking on (L to Right):

Leigh Draper, NY-NJ Trail Conference; Dr. Michael Rubbo, Teatown Lake Reservation; Ned Sullivan, Scenic Hudson; John Botti, FASNY Conservancy Taskforce; Mischa Zabotin, Chairman, FASNY Board of Trustees; Geoff Thompson, FASNY; Patti Bressman, Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation; Zywia Wojnar, Pace Univ. Law School Energy & Climate Center) at former Ridgeway Country Club Clubhouse this morning. Only Teatown Lake Reservation, according to Mr. Thompson, has any contractual arrangements with FASNY on the project, and had, according to Thompson, gotten involved long before the Greens to Greens Conservancy concept was created by FASNY

Zabotin, Chairman of the French American School of New York announced, "We are proud to have received the endorsement of 16 (environmental) signatories to this meaningful letter of support (to Mayor Thomas Roach of White Plains and Common Council)," for the school plans to create an 84-acre Greens to Greens Conservancy adjacent to a new school campus on 46 acres on the rest of the site of the former Ridgeway Country Club.

The letter sent the Mayor announcing the 16 environmental leaders who support the project was furnished to the media at a news conference Thursday morning at the old, deserted Ridgeway Country Club clubhouse.

The letter to the Mayor and Council concludes with this statement: "Because of the thoroughness of analysis, research, planning and the commitment shown by the FASNY leadership to create and share with the public two thirds of their property as a bio-diverse, healthy and sustainable nature preserve, we strongly endorse the French-American School of New York's proposal and encourage you and the Common Council to approve its application for a Special Permit. This is a unique chance for the city leaders to leave a legacy of a healthy, livable White Plains for future generations to enjoy."

Zabotin was flanked by six of the organizations signing the letter. The organization signees to the letter to the city are:

Bard Center for Environmental Policy, Bard MBA Program in Sustainability; Scenic Hudson; Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies; Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture; Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation; Teatown Lake Reservation; Green Schools Coalition of Westchester; Walkable Westchester; Hudson River Valley Environmental Education Institute; Westchester Land Trust; Jonathan Rose Companies; Westchester County Pest Management Committee; New York-New Jersey Trail Conference; Westmoreland Sanctuary; Pace Energy & Climate Center, Pace Law School, and Benjamin Van Doren, Intel Science Talent Search, 5th Place, USA White Plains High School 2012.



A question from Rich Liebson of the *Journal News* asking what made the conservancy alternative better than letting the land grow wild, was answered by **Ned**

Sullivan of Scenic Hudson, (Center, above) who said that the conservancy would rehabilitate the land and revive animal habitat, which probably would not happen if a subdivision or a sports complex (suggested by the city's Open Space Recreation District Ordinance under consideration) were built instead.

Mr. Sullivan said more than once that FASNY had conducted a "model" SEQRA review process.

The environmentalists on the panel were asked if their groups would participate in a legal action to overturn a city decision to reject the project. All indicated by not answering and shrugs of shoulders they were not going to respond to that question. Mr. Zabotin said that was a matter for Michael Zarin, the FASNY legal advisor.

This article comes from White Plains CitizeNetReporter
<http://www.WhitePlainsCNR.com>

The URL for this story is:
<http://www.WhitePlainsCNR.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=9255>