

MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of the City  
Council of the City of Rye held in City Hall on February  
5, 1997 at 8:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

EDWARD B. DUNN, Mayor  
CAROLYN C. CUNNINGHAM  
ROBERT H. HUTCHINGS  
JOSEPH L. LATWIN  
KATHLEEN E. WALSH  
Councilmen

ABSENT: JAMES K. BURKE  
EDWARD J. COLLINS  
Councilmen

1. Roll Call

Mayor Dunn called the meeting to order at 8:15 P.M.; a quorum was present to conduct official City Business.

The Mayor apologized for convening the meeting fifteen minutes late.

Mayor Dunn announced that Councilman Collins has been in intensive care in a Florida hospital. He is expected to be released from the hospital in a few days.

Councilman Burke is also slightly indisposed.

2. Presentation of Distinguished Service Awards

Mayor Dunn acknowledged the extraordinary dedication and commitment of the vast number of citizen volunteers who serve the City on various Boards and Commissions. The City and its residents are the beneficiaries of their talents. As their service ends, the City Council recognizes and expresses its appreciation by presenting Distinguished Service Awards to Mrs. Marie Vitetta and Mr. Richard Verille of the Rye Golf Commission who were present at this meeting.

Distinguished Service Awards will be forwarded to the following:

Lawrence Cioppa	Recreation Commission
Roger Perry	Board of Appeals
Isobel Perry	Commission on Human Rights
James Michael Shea	Community Residence Advisory Committee
Nancy Hackett	Community Residence Advisory Committee
Regan Orillac	Community Residence Advisory Committee
Christopher Stackpole	Conservation Commission/Advisory Committee
Paul Benowitz	Planning Commission

The following agenda item was taken out of order.

4. Old Business

Under Old Business, Mayor Dunn disclosed that a tentative settlement of the Home Depot dispute has been proposed. He said that the settlement could not be acted upon until public discussion was held at the next City Council meeting scheduled for February 26, 1997. The Mayor detailed the elements of the tentative settlement, including the proposed payment of \$200,000 to the City for road improvements.

3. Presentation of Master Plan for Whitby Castle and Related Facilities.

Mr. Frank Adimari, chairman of the Whitby Castle Committee, briefly summarized the work of the Committee. Mr. Adimari said that the Master Plan's objectives are :

- to preserve Whitby as a continuing part of the Historic District,
- to have Whitby accessible to the general public and the members of the Rye Golf Club,
- to have some portion of the food services offered at a medium price,
- to have the catering operation self-sufficient so that it will pay for the renovation, and the maintenance of the building without dramatically impacting the membership fees.

Mr. Adimari indicated that the Committee believed that the Plan was exciting and doable. He expressed the hope that the City Council will support placing a referendum on the ballot in a special election on June 17, 1997, for the issuance of bonds to support the project.

Mr. Peter Gisolfi, architect, apprised the Council that the Master Plan for Whitby Castle and related facilities has been circulated to the Council and various Boards of the City. He expressed his appreciation to the City staff, committee members, and Councilwoman Cunningham for their work in creating the Plan narrative. Mr. Gisolfi explained that this is a

Master Plan and by its nature is a feasibility study. The plan looks at the problems and possible solutions; it also looks at size, budget, and alternatives. This, however, is not a final design. If the bond referendum does pass in June, then a more formal detailed design process would begin and additional suggestions would be incorporated and reviewed.

Mr. Gisolfi summarized the plan components as follows:

The 1850's building will be renovated to preserve the visual connection between Route 1 and Whitby Castle.

The twentieth century additions will be demolished and a new addition will be constructed. This would house the catering space which would be an integral financial part of the support for the facility.

The footprint of the new addition will be smaller than the current structure and the new construction would not be visible from Route 1.

A new golf building, containing modern locker room facilities for men and women, a relocated pro shop, and a golf bag storage room area will be constructed near the current starter building.

The proposed site plan will improve parking, as well as enhance safety and aesthetics.

This Plan demonstrates that it is possible to restore the Castle, accommodate the needs of the golfers, improve safety, and provide space for a catering facility which would pay for the renovations and provide future funds.

Mayor Dunn explained that the next step would be to refer the Master Plan and the Environmental Assessment Forms to the Rye Golf Club Commission, the Planning Commission, the Landmarks Advisory Committee, and the Board of Architectural Review for their comments. It would then be reviewed by the City staff, the bond counsel, and a financial advisor by the March 5, 1997 City Council Meeting.

Mr. Richard Verille, Purchase Street, questioned who would assume the liability responsibility if bond payments were not made.

City Manager Culross indicated that the bond is supported by the full faith of the City of Rye. The financial forecast indicates that the facility will generate sufficient revenues to pay the bond.

Mr. Russell Cecil, 56 Lynden Street, representing the Landmarks Advisory Committee (LAC), said that LAC will submit a report in the next few weeks. He stated that LAC supports this effort and is delighted with the restoration of Whitby Castle. LAC's main concern is in those areas which relate to restoration, standards, and the architectural treatment of the banquet addition.

Mr. Tiberio Gaspari, Locust Avenue, said that the members of the Golf Club should vote on whether the City or the Golf Club members should fund the changes to the Club. Some earlier plans were rejected because they were not sensitive to the needs of the golf members, he said.

In response to Mr. Otto Spaeth's question on clarification of item 6, page 2 in the Master Plan, City Manager Culross said that historically the caterer would book the second floor meeting rooms in Whitby.

Mr. George De Filippo, Palisade Road, reiterated an earlier question about the financial responsibility for the bond. Will the burden of payment fall upon the club members or the taxpayers of the City of Rye in the event of default?

City Manager Culross answered that City of Rye's faith and credit would be pledged on the bond. Therefore, the City would be ultimately responsible for the payment of debt. Over a 20 year period it will be a revenue maker despite the fact that there is an anticipated shortfall in the first few years. That shortfall is actually less than the golf members are currently absorbing, and certainly no larger than when the Club was purchased. Since the Committee has been comprised almost entirely of club members, they are comfortable with this proposal and the economic analysis is good.

Mr. Irving C. Herrmann, Forest Avenue, indicated that his impression of the plan was one of a change of philosophy and that the facility would no longer be for the exclusive use of the citizens of Rye. He noted that he would not want to see the banquet facilities overshadow the Castle.

Councilwoman Cunningham mentioned that previously the catering function was a commercial operation which yielded approximately \$125,000 annually. However, this new facility would be self-sustaining.

Mayor Dunn explained there will be several more opportunities to raise questions.

City Manager Culross announced that the Plan, with attachments and appendices, will be on file at the Library, the Rye Golf Club, and the City Clerk's Office.

Councilwoman Cunningham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Latwin and unanimously carried, to refer the Master Plan for Whitby Castle and Related Facilities, to Rye Golf Club, the Planning Commission, the Landmarks Advisory Committee, and the Board of Architectural Review for comments. It will then be reviewed by City staff, the bond counsel, and a financial advisor by the March 5, 1997 City Council Meeting.

5. Residents may be heard who have matters to discuss that do not appear on the agenda

There were no residents present who had matters to discuss that did not appear on the agenda.

6. Resolution establishing a Finance Committee for the City of Rye

Mayor Dunn introduced a resolution to establish a Finance Committee for the City of Rye.

Councilman Latwin made a motion, seconded by Councilman Hutchings and unanimously carried, to adopt the following resolution:

**WHEREAS**, citizen advisory committees form an important governmental foundation in the City of Rye; and

**WHEREAS**, past financial advisory committees of limited duration have supplied important citizen input on budget and other city financial matters; and

**WHEREAS**, against the above background of success, it is in the best interests of the City to establish a permanent citizens' advisory committee on finances; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that a permanent Finance Committee for the City of Rye is hereby established to consist of seven members, all residents of Rye, to serve for three-year terms; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the initial appointments shall be staggered with two one year terms, two two-year terms, and three three-year terms; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the members of the Finance Committee shall be appointed by the Mayor, with the approval of the City Council and that one member shall be designated by the Mayor as Chairman; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Committee shall have the following duties:

1. To advise the City Council on appropriate revenue and expenditure policies and financial policies;
2. To review quarterly and annual financial statements of the City and report findings to the City Council;
3. To review the annual budgets of the City, including all the funds therein, and report their findings to the City Council;
4. To undertake such other studies as shall be assigned to them or as they shall deem appropriate to assure that the financial condition and policies of the City are sound and that the taxpayers are receiving appropriate value.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Mayor Dunn, Councilmen Cunningham, Hutchings,  
Latwin and Walsh

NAYS: None.

ABSENT: Councilmen Burke and Collins

The resolution passed.

Mayor Dunn indicated that he will hopefully have nominees by the March Council Meeting.

7. Consideration of the request of the Rye Chamber of Commerce for permission to hold its annual sidewalk sales on July 24, 25, and 26, 1997

Councilman Latwin made a motion, seconded by Councilman Hutchings and unanimously carried, to approve the request of the Rye Chamber of Commerce to hold its annual sidewalk sale on July 24, 25 and 26, 1997.

8. Draft unapproved minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council held January 22, 1997

Councilwoman Cunningham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Hutchings and unanimously carried, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the City Council held January 22, 1997 as submitted.

9. Miscellaneous communications and reports

A. Councilman Latwin advised the City Council that the Board of Appeals' special committee will submit a report to the Council about bringing the City Code as it relates to the Board of Appeals into conformity with recent changes in N.Y.S. law. It was suggested that this matter be placed on the agenda for a Council meeting in March.

B. Councilwoman Cunningham noted that she will be offering some proposed changes for the Central Business District to make it more pedestrian friendly by improving the crosswalks. She has spoken with City Manager Culross and Corporation Counsel Gardella, as well as the staff and would like to see the crosswalks more distinctly marked. She will present a more specific proposal at the next Council Meeting.

10. New Business

A. Mayor Dunn asked for a motion to change the date of the next Council Meeting from February 19th to February 26, 1997.

Councilwoman Cunningham made a motion, seconded by Councilman Hutchings and unanimously carried, to change the date of the regularly scheduled Council meeting from February 19, 1997 to February 26, 1997.

B. Mayor Dunn apprised the Council that the City has two fairly complicated land use proposals from the Library and the YMCA. Since these are very complex issues, the Mayor expressed the feeling that a council member should be a point person for general discussion and also to keep the Council apprised of developments. The Mayor asked Councilwoman Walsh if she would accept this responsibility. Councilwoman Walsh agreed to the Mayor's request.

11. Adjournment

Councilman Hutchings made a motion, seconded by Councilwoman Cunningham and unanimously carried, to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice K. Conrad  
City Clerk

