

THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

M I N U T E S

Special Committee on Land Development

October 21, 1983

- Present: Messrs. Dilworth (Chairman), Bowersock, Forrestal, Hansmann, Selberg, Taplin, Wolfensohn, Woolf. Also Messrs. Field, Stewart, Straus, and Rowe. Mesdames Delmas, Labalme, Laesker.
- Presiding Officer: Mr. Dilworth opened the meeting at 3:50 p.m.
- Minutes: The minutes of April 22, 1983, were approved.

Dr. Woolf reviewed briefly the events of the past. Plans for the property had been underway for many years without controversy. In the past few months, the community had become alarmed that the housing proposed represented an assault on the woods and environment. In the ensuing discussions, the Institute had considered reducing its original project of 400-600 units to as few as 150 units. The community, however, wished there to be no development at all. The Institute had encouraged the community to respond with acceptable alternatives and had even given some funds to help them to organize, which they had subsequently done under the name of "Friends of Princeton Open Space." A branch of the Sierra Club had become involved and petitions had been gathered to protest such development. A dialogue between these groups and the Institute had begun, and the Institute had agreed to delay any further action until the end of this year.

Whereas the Institute had hoped to realize from \$8-12 million over a six year period, the group could only offer them a possible 3-5 million which, by coming early, they said, would grow to a comparable gain for the Institute.

The Trust for Public Land had recently become involved in the situation and Dr. Woolf had asked them to investigate the possibility of a land swap of some sort.

"Friends of Princeton Open Space" was now talking only about the sum of \$2 million, but Dr. Woolf said that the Institute had paid about that sum for the land to start with and that it remained within our right to sell it for development purposes, although that was not our current intent.

He considered the discussion to be moving on a good level. There was no doubt about the sincerity of these groups.

Mr. Taplin said that while we ought to keep the pressure on, he felt that there was no doubt but that we would have to abandon all development plans. \$2 million up front would be very useful, were we to get it.

Dr. Woolf thought we should reserve the right to go back to an agricultural use, including the possibility of an experimental agricultural station, or an educational venture.

Mr. Dilworth pointed out that only when the development seemed immanent did the community get organized. Now we should make every effort at a compromise since community attitude is important for now and for the future.

Professor Selberg stated that false information had been disseminated in order to get some of the petitioners to sign, and he felt that the community would soon get over its ill-will should the development proceed.

Professor Bowersock said that there was a group of people who did care very deeply, that the open space was part of the Institute as they conceived of it.

Mrs. Delmas suggested that the issue be put on the back burner for 20 years as the land will only increase in value. People's attitudes toward land use change from generation to generation.

Mr. Taplin felt concerned as a Trustee about the preservation of the land as part of the Institute. He felt it would be the wrong land for development at any time, considering the flood plain problem. Now is the time we should prevent any possibility of future development. He did not agree with the view that community ill-will would subside with time.

Mr. Forrestal said that they were Trustees of the Institute, not of the community which could take care of itself. The land was an asset. We should try to realize from whatever disposition is made of it a necessary increase to our endowment. The town must come forward with a proposal. Until it does, we should not retreat from our position. In response to a question, Dr. Woolf said that the amount received from renting the land to a farmer just covers taxes. Concern was expressed that should the development rights be sold to the community group they might then expect even more from the Institute in maintenance, etc.

Mr. Straus asked whether it were realistically possible to go ahead now. Mr. Forrestal felt we should proceed, but not precipitously.

Mrs. Delmas said that if people raise the money and then we don't do what they expect, we are in an awkward position.

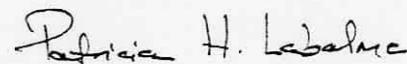
Dr. Woolf proposed that we withdraw, for the time being, from any further activity, that we wait to see what the community support is, since we had a formal agreement to the end of this December, and that we consider establishing a "Forest and Field Fund" to solicit contributions from the petitioners and concerned community. Meanwhile, we should indicate that \$2 million is too low a price, that \$4-5 million would be more acceptable. And perhaps a good land swap will be found.

Mr. Straus pointed out that by contributing to a "Forest and Field Fund", contributors might develop a proprietary sense about the woods and fields and if development took place at some future time, perhaps become even more incensed. Therefore the Fund should be more generally named.

Mr. Dilworth proposed we follow the course suggested by Dr. Woolf until December.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia H. Labalme
Secretary of the Corporation