

GREEN BROOK FLOOD CONTROL COMMISSION
NEWSLETTER
111 GREENBROOK ROAD, GREEN BROOK, NEW JERSEY 08812

VOLUME XV, NUMBER 6

NOVEMBER 2001

PROSPECT PLACE, MIDDLESEX BOROUGH

In the last Newsletter, the desire of the people on Prospect Place to be "bought out" was described.

The buyout of ten houses on nearby Raritan Avenue means that the protective levee along the Ambrose Brook won't be needed. (One owner declined the buyout. The other nine accepted, and the houses will be dismantled).

The money saved is enough to do what the Prospect Place people want - a buyout of their houses. However, only Congress has the authority to make such a money transfer.

Now it was time for the Commission to spring into action.

CONGRESSMAN FERGUSON PICKS UP THE BALL

Congressman Mike Ferguson heard about this problem.

Even though he is a new member in the House of Representatives, he proposed the necessary wording in the Appropriations Act for year 2002 which was going through Congress.

The first consideration of the 2002 Act by the Congress left out Congressman Ferguson's language.

LOTS OF STEPS IN THE CONGRESSIONAL PROCESS

As we all remember from our grade school civics lessons, Congress makes law in a series of many steps.

Congressman Ferguson tried again when the 2002 Act came to the next Committee level. He enlisted the help of other members of Congress from New Jersey, and in this second step, he succeeded.

The necessary wording to authorize a buyout of the houses on Prospect Place (in Middlesex Borough) was included in the Act approved by the full House of Representatives.

THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Our two Senators from New Jersey picked up the ball. The Congressional record shows that both Senator Torricelli and Senator Corzine went on record in the US Senate in support of this change.

When the US Senate finished their work on this complicated legislation, covering every water related project throughout the country, the bill went to a House-Senate Conference Committee.

Conference Committees are made up of a small number of experienced Representatives from the House, and an equal number of Senators.

ANOTHER COMPLICATION

The first version of the Conference Committee's action approved the buyout of only 10 houses - not 22.

(Nobody seems to know why. It is really an all-or-nothing proposition.)

The events of September 11th brought the whole process to a halt, while Congress dealt with urgent actions.

In the time since then, Congressman Ferguson has been seeking the help of other members from New Jersey. Congressman Frelinghuysen is a member of the Conference Committee, and in a powerful position to help.

SUCCESS

In recent days, the Conference Committee met again. This time they agreed to the buyout of all 22 houses on Prospect Place. We don't know exactly how it happened.

But we do know that the main credit goes to Congressman Mike Ferguson, and to the experience of Congressman Frelinghuysen and the support of our two US Senators, Torricelli and Corzine.

The people of Prospect Place will now receive what they want - the purchase of their houses so that they can live in safety elsewhere. The Prospect Place peninsula will revert to open land.

MORE GOOD NEWS

On top of that good news, there is more. This same Act provides the full amount of money needed for year 2002: \$10 million. The Commission is grateful to all who represent us in Congress.

WHY IT ALL HAPPENS

This progress happens because the Counties and Towns of the area formed the Flood Control Commission.

And because they have steadily supported the Green Brook Flood Control Commission through thick and thin with capable appointees and adequate funds.