



GROSVENOR

Minutes

**Eaton Square Garden AGM
7 September 2009 - 5.00pm
St Michael's Church, Chester Square, London**

Present:

Committee

Mr Waite (GW) - Chair
Mrs Pederson (BP)
Mr Davie (SD)
Princess Galitzine (JG)

Grosvenor

Nigel Hughes (NAH)
Stephen Smith (SS)
Chris Anderson (CA)
Charles Copper (CC)
Fran Giles (FJG) - Secretary

Residents

Mr Pederson	Mrs Shulman	Ms McBride
Mr Hilton	Mrs Hilton	Mr Murfet
Mrs Payton	Mr Swartz	Mr Mawson
Mr Woolley	Mrs Woolley (JW)	Ms Conway (SC)
Lady Bischoff (RB)		

Apologies:

Mr and Mrs Archer	Mr and Mrs Carroll	Mrs Bloomfield
Goldenwalks Ltd	Ms Adler	Sir John Craven
Lady Foley	Montana Investment Corp	Lady Aline Cholmondeley
Mr Kozerski	Mrs Scrutton	Ms Dobbs
Mr and Mrs Deily	Buchanan Smith Ltd	Mr D'Urso
Galesh Ltd	Eton House Estate Ltd	Goldtone Resources Ltd
Mrs Donald	Countess of Stockton	Mr and Mrs Holroyd
Mrs Tollman	Panoceanic Trading Corp	Sir Peter Davis
Lady Susan Davis	Portwell Property Holdings Ltd	
Alwen Hough Johnson Ltd		

Minutes copied to: All attendees and apologies; Eaton Square Gardens website; Debbie White
All Eaton Square Garden keyholders, freeholders and lessees

Action

1.0 Introductions

1.1 GW and the committee introduced themselves to the meeting.

2.0 Minutes of the AGM held on 6 February 2008

2.1 GW proposed that the minutes of the 2008 AGM be accepted, but that any comments on them could still be made and the minutes updated if necessary. This was agreed by the meeting.

3.0 Chairman's and Grosvenor's Report

3.1 It is sometimes difficult to take an impartial view on works that one is very closely involved with; and therefore in 2002 Grosvenor and the Eaton Square Garden Committee [ESGC] commissioned the Landscape Agency to prepare a Management Plan [Plan] for the Eaton Square Gardens.

The Plan covered a detailed analysis and appraisal of the gardens and included:

- An Historic Analysis of the 1867 Concept
- A detailed Tree Survey
- Analysis of Soil Quality and Irrigation
- Analysis of Hard and Soft Landscaping
- And an analysis of Garden Management and Maintenance
- The Plan was a real working document, and provided:
 - A Master Plan
 - A Landscape Strategy, together with
 - A Detailed Action Plan, and
 - A Recommended Order Of Works

In January of this year the Landscape Agency were invited to assess the current conditions of the gardens; the resultant Report is available to residents for review (copies are available on request or on the Eaton Square Gardens website).. The Report included the following list of achievements:

- The replanting of the 3 North Gardens has been very successful and all gardens have matured well
- The soil conditions have much improved due to annual mulching of the shrub beds; and this is reflected in the appearance of the plants
- The planting in the borders adjacent to the Kings Road now act as a very effective screen [with one or two exceptions]
- The management standards have improved which reflects in the appearance of the gardens; the gardens look considerably better than they did in 2002
- The gardens are being conserved in a very positive way
- The addition of the Potager in the South East garden is an exciting addition
- The path surface in the North West garden has recently been resurfaced with Coxwell gravel unifying the surface treatment with the North East, South West and East gardens

The Report provides individual recommendations for each garden; and reminds us that “...within the six gardens there is scope for developing the special character of each space to provide a series of different experiences and values, favouring respectively colour; fragrance; activity; wildlife; dogs; ornament; and repose...”

GW explained that the recommendations/points raised in the report for each garden would be better explained by SS (see 3.2 below).

3.2 SS then gave an overview of the Landscape Agency's report for each of the six gardens:

NW Garden

- Pruning has already begun
- Seating areas immediately opposite central gate - not a particularly good area to sit in, very exposed. Suggestion to use this site for a feature rather than a seat and move seat to alternative location

N Central Garden

- Increase herbaceous planting
- Increase “specimen” trees. Need to be careful with tree replacements as new ones cannot be planted in the shade of older trees
- Put shrubs into planting gaps
- List of specimen trees to plant in lawn to make use of the space and to create a vista from top to bottom of the garden

NE Garden

- The bench area has been moved from one side to one end of the garden to take advantage of the vista
- Very careful planting needed because of dogs using the garden. Suggestion to plant

entrances with *Butchers Broom* to help prevent dogs going into the borders by the entrances

SE Garden

- Plant up bench areas with fragrant flowering shrubs and long term plants, less annuals

S Central Garden

- Consider increasing exotic planting
- Committee to consider design for fountain in the garden. Current fountain is not particularly successful

SW Garden

- Increase bulb planting
- Holes are appearing in lawn due to dogs digging - committee to consider the options for this garden

Generally

- Improve entrances

- 3.3 SD reminded the meeting that the marquees will be erected again for the Garden Open Squares Day in June and can be used for other parties at this time. The marquees could also be put up in July or August if required.
- 3.4 BP/SS commented that the Potager which had been suggested two years ago has proved very successful. SC asked if anyone can pick the vegetables and if there was a charge. SS confirmed that anyone can pick them and that so far there had been no charge.
- 3.5 NAH advised the meeting that the Public Realm proposals for the Elizabeth Street area, that were originally planned to start in 2009, are still waiting for approval from Westminster City Council and will be delayed until January 2010. The plans include improving the carriageway, lighting, pavements and making a more pleasant environment for residents and retailers.

GW commented that the plans showed the Eaton Square road surfaces being upgraded to York stone blocks/cobbles and suggested that these could be matched at the entrances to the gardens. NAH commented that this would be a later phase of the works.

- 3.6 GW commented that at the previous AGM two ideas were put forward but had not yet been followed through.
- 1) Exercise trail
 - 2) Children's play area

JW agreed that an exercise trail would be excellent in the garden if it was done sympathetically to the surroundings. GW invited JW to join the committee to champion this issue.

GW requested that if anyone had ideas for the garden, they should make them known to the committee, as consideration will always be given to new ideas.

RB asked if consideration had previously been given to putting lighting in trees as it is very dark when walking dogs at night. GW advised that this suggestion had been raised before. GW invited RB to join the committee to champion this issue.

RB suggested that it may be a good idea to have donated trees in the garden, with name plaques.

- 3.7 GW advised that the committee had tried to return the Vivien Leigh bench to the Vivien Leigh Society but they declined it.

SD commented that Vivien Leigh's daughter had expressed no interest in the seat. The seat itself is held together with a few bits of metal and SD suggested it could be replaced with a more practical / comfortable one.

JW commented that it would nice to keep the Vivien Leigh reference and therefore part of the garden's history.

It was agreed that SS would make an inspection of the bench and better report its condition to the committee.

4.0 2008 Financial Outcome

4.1 GW reminded the meeting that the gardens are paid for in arrears. GW suggested that the accounts to December 2008 should be accepted, but if anyone had any comments they wished to make, they were welcome to do so. GW comments were:

- 2008 figures were under budget but were approximately 11% higher than 2007
- The major cost of the gardens is labour, which is in excess of 50% of the total garden charge; however
- SS and his team have kept the labour costs on target despite extra necessary works caused by tree loss, and the extended period of leaf fall etc

NAH commented that the money in the tennis court sink fund was used first for works to the tennis court then the balance put towards capital garden works.

5.0 2009 Budget

5.1 GW advised that to date, 40% of the 2009 budget had been spent. No major works or problems are anticipated so the accounts should come in on target.

6.0 Election of Committee

6.1 The existing committee resigned. The members that were re-elected were:

George Waite
Mrs Donald
Lady Bristol
Simon Davie
Mrs Pederson
Princess Galitzine

In addition, the following were elected to the committee:

Mrs Woolley
Lady Bischoff
Mrs Shulman

7.0 Any Other Business

7.1 NAH advised that the proposed Cycle Hire point, as part of the TfL plan for London, that was proposed for Belgrave Place (next to Eaton Square), has been granted planning permission. The plan proposes a cycle hire point every 300m, not near to stations. NAH advised that Grosvenor had objected to the one proposed for Belgrave Place but that nearly all the planning permissions were granted.

GW commented that this could spoil the gardens. SD commented that this could cause litter problems.

JW asked if there was time to object and NAH explained that there was not, as planning permission had already been granted. NAH commented that all residents affected should have received a letter regarding this and that posters should be been put up in the area.

7.2 RW proposed that a vote of thanks be given to the gardeners as they do an excellent job and the gardens are very well maintained. This was agreed by the meeting.

GW advised that one of the gardens had again been entered in the London Garden Squares competition and that the result was awaited.

Post meeting note: South Central Garden received a 'highly commended' award

- 7.3 FJG reminded the meeting that there was a website for Eaton Square Gardens, with photos, minutes, information and events. This is part of Grosvenor's website for the gardens it manages. The Eaton Square page can be found at:

<http://www.grosvenor-gardens.co.uk/EatonSquareGarden/>