Council debates public land in zoning code

By ANNE CONNERS
and MICHAEL J. VAND
Collegian Staff Writers

Public lands and their proper place in the borough's zoning code was the subject of prolonged debate at Monday's meeting of the State College Municipal Council.

Roger Downs, State College Planning Commission chairman, defined public districts as plots of land owned by the borough or a municipal authority that are not subject to usual zoning restrictions. The commission recommended that the council rezone all public lands so that they would be the same as adjacent property classifications.

"We're tidying up the zoning map and getting rid of a district that serves no function," Downs said. "The public district is absolutely and totally flexible. And it's the only part of the zoning ordinance that is out of control. The whole purpose of zoning is to control land usage."

But several council members objected to automatically reclassifying all 19 public districts by amending the zoning ordinance.

"This is a dynamic community, and we should rezone on a case-by-case basis," council member Gary Wiser said.

The Centre Area Transportation Authority, located on Osmond Street near the State College borough-Ferguson Township border, is the prime example of the difficulties in rezoning public lands. Since the bus garage moved in in 1975, residents have complained of excessive noise and fumes in the area.

In a 4-3 vote Monday, the council approved a motion by Wiser that the land be reclassified to a R-2 (residential) zone.

However, CATA managing director Paul Oversier and several council members said the rezoning of the land might make it more difficult for CATA to sell the land and move to a new facility, which it hopes to do in a year.

If the CATA land had remained in the public domain, the only possible buyers would have been the borough or another municipal authority. But now that the land is reclassified as R-2, Oversier worries that neither the borough nor other investors will want to buy it.

"If the borough adheres to its own zoning regulations, then the R-2 district would eliminate the borough from being a potential buyer and quite frankly, the borough is only one of the two buyers we can identify right now," Oversier said.

Originally, CATA was supposed to pay back the 96 percent funding it received from the state and federal governments. But because of CATA's overcrowded and unsafe garage conditions, the federal and state governments had indicated that they would accept 96 percent of whatever price the property would fetch.

"The federal and state government has said 'We don't care if you take a loss, just give us what you can get,' " Oversier said.

Council member Mary Ann Haas agreed that the borough might not be able to find any buyers for the land if it were in a R-2.

"I think R-2 is unrealistic for the land, and I think we're tying ourselves up unmercifully," she said.

Council member Daniel Chaffee, a realtor, said yesterday he does not think it will be more difficult to sell the land as R-2 because it could be sold for a nonconforming use. Although he favors changing the zoning on a case-by-case basis he said he voted against the measure because the decision was made too hastily.

Chaffee said the council did not have time to digest a legal opinion on the change from Borough Solicitor Robert Kistler. He said he believes the decision was rushed through because a new council takes office next month. Two members who voted for the change, Joseph Wakeley Jr. and Fred Honsberger, will not be returning to the council in January.

University student starting campaign for Hollings

"Hollings for President" is one motto the University community may become more familiar with if Bernard F. Sagan is successful with his campaigning efforts.

Sagan (sophomore-foreign service and international politics) was named acting University coordinator for the Students for Hollings Campaign Sept. 19, said Alan Jacobson, assistant national yield director for the National Ernest Hollings for President Campaign.

The campaign is located on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Sagan said some of Hollings' strong qualities included his practical approach to problems and the fact that Hollings has proved his legislative experience as a Democratic senator for South Carolina.

"Hollings does what's good for the country — not what's good for this women's group or what's good for this black group — what's good for the country," he said.

Sagan said he became interested in serving on the Hollings campaign while interning in Washington this past summer at the Congressional Campaign Committee which included the offices of Gary Hart, D-Ind., and John Glenn, D-Ohio, as well as Hollings.

"I was in charge of all the articles which were released to the press and through this I learned about what Hollings stood for," he said. "From this I decided to back Hollings."

Sagan said he is now planning a fund-raising and publicizing event to benefit the campaign. Although no definite date has been set for the fund-raiser, Sagan said that it is expected to be held this spring.

ence included service as military adviser and representative for the Richard Orloski for Congress Committee 1982 Campaign. Orloski lost the bid to Republican Donald Ritter in Lehigh and Northampton counties.

—by Terry Mutchler

AP Laserphoto

Obstacle overcome

Maria Bottiglieri, a 20-year-old Temple University student, smiles after doing an exercise in singing at Philadelphia's Settlement School. Afflicted with cerebral palsy since birth, Bottiglieri has had to overcome her difficulty with standing, because an erect posture is essential for good singing.

Stealing Christmas trees could result in trip to prison

By LESLIE THOMAS
Collegian Staff Writer

Persons caught adding University trees to their list of holiday decorations may find themselves spending next Christmas in prison.

University Police Services Officer Fran Kinley said that anyone caught stealing University trees will be charged with theft of University property and will face criminal penalties. If the value of the stolen or damaged tree is less than $50, the perpetrator may receive up to a year in prison. In addition, the penalty that accompanies the theft of a tree valued between $50 and $200, could be as much as two years in prison or a $5,000 fine, or both, Kinley said.

University students caught stealing trees will also be referred to the Office of Conduct Standards, Kinley said.

Donald Suit, director of student conduct standards, said the theft of a tree worth $50 or more can result in suspension from the University for a semester. Theft from a posted research area can entail a cost of up to $50,000 and result in dismissal from the University.

Police services reported two trees missing last weekend. A large ornamental pine wort $600 was taken from the Blue golf course area, and an ornamental tree worth $225 was missing from the Applied Research Lab on Burrowes Road.

"The monetary value of the trees is not a commercial estimate," Kinley said. Commercial trees usually cost approximately $3 per foot. University research trees cost $30 per foot, and the ornamental blue spruces and evergreens cost up to $60 per foot, she said.

Theft or damage of research trees is sometimes irreplaceable because students and professors use them in research and classwork, Suit said.

Jeffrey Ertel, University grounds maintenance foreman, said damage estimates are determined by the cost of removing the stump or damaged tree, replacing the tree and installing the new tree.

A reduction in the number of thefts may be seen this year because students will be leaving sooner for the holidays and returning later than in previous years, Suit said.

In 1981, damages totaled $20,000 when 53 trees were stolen or damaged, Kinley said. In 1982, police services used the media to ask students not to steal or damage University-owned trees and also warned the students of the consequences. Six trees were reported damaged or stolen that year, Kinley said.

AP Laserphoto

Friends

Ed Frac and his Irish setter, Kelly, are silhouetted against the sky while running in a field off Hill Street in Bristol,Conn., recently.

Republican Committee must elect new chair, vice chair

By MICHAEL J. VAND
Collegian Staff Writer

The chairman and vice chairwoman of the Centre County Republican Committee last week announced they will not run for re-election in the May 1984 primary.

Chairman Floyd Fischer and vice chairwoman Joyce Kerr are completing their third terms in office. Both were initially elected to the two-year positions in May, 1978.

Fischer said he and Kerr believe the time has come for new blood in the leadership of the Centre County Republican Party and neither desires to become permanent holders of the offices. Both intend to remain active in the political arena, but neither Fischer nor Kerr have announced any future plans.

"Although each of us reached this decision separately we are making a joint announcement early so that interested candidates among county Republicans can make appropriate plans to seek the office," Fischer said.

Fischer said several people have expressed interest in running for the posts, but declined further comment. Bernie Hughs, chairman of the Penn State College Republicans, said he did not know of possible candidates for the positions. Interested persons must file for the election before the end of January, Hughs said.

State College Municipal Council member Fred Honsberger said he was not interested in running for either of the posts. Honsberger was defeated in the primary race for the Republican nomination for Centre County commissioner this year and will not be returning to the council.

Council president Joseph Wakeley, Jr. did not rule out the possibility of seeking the post of chairman.

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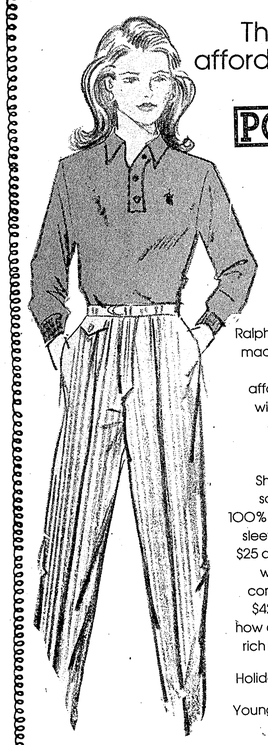

The rich affordables from POLO

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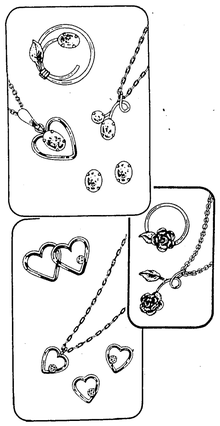

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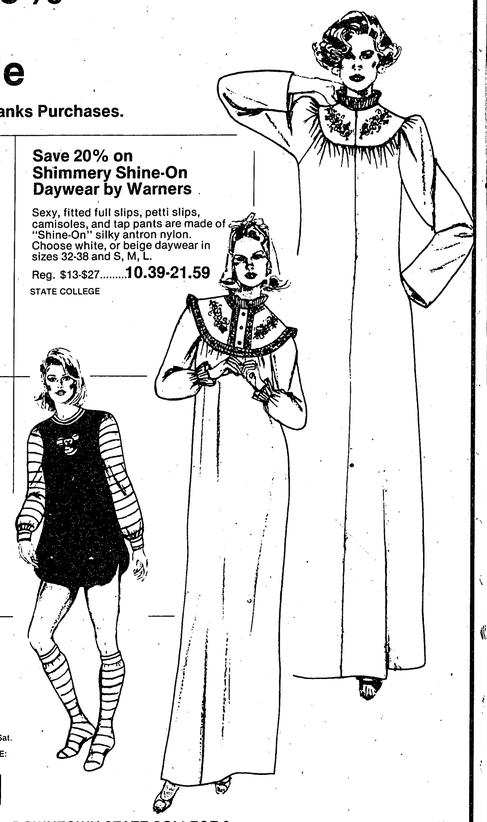

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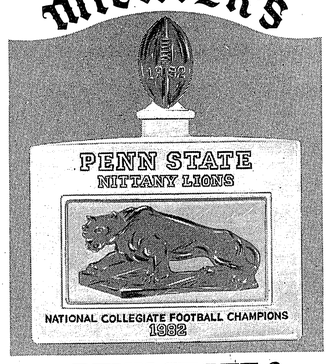

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