Marina slides under water as park contract founders

By Silvia Ascarelli

Time is running out on the plan to build a Liberty State Park marina in time for the May 1 season opener.

Meanwhile, the park's development corporation, designated developer and public advisory commission argue over the contract.

The odds on meeting the deadline depend on the amount of time the Liberty State Park Advisory Commission has left, said Chet Mattson, president of Waterfront Development Corp.

But the advisory commission, which is fighting the corporation's marina proposal, Corp., is being "stonewalled" on its requests for information, charged Morris Pesin, a commission member. Without that information, the commission can't evaluate the plan.

"If it (concluding negotiations) goes more than somewhere between a few days and a couple of weeks, our chosen bidder is saying it's '88 before the first time and dock there," Mattson said.

"We're at nervous time, no doubt about it," he said.

Audrey Zapp, another commission member, said: "The way it can be settled is to drop the controversial elements...the glorious country club elements...that are built into this plan."

The commission is asking for financial information and studies showing the parking, traffic, environmental and economic impacts of the proposed slip marina, said Zapp. She said she wants information justifying the larger marina — a change in a master plan that took 10 years to develop.

"Their lack of giving us this information is the factor, why we can't complete this report," she said. "We've gone as far as we can."

Mattson and the commission's ad-hoc committee on the matter are to meet Wednesday.