

**ADA TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 12, 2012 MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Open Space Preservation Advisory Board was held on Thursday, January 12, 2012. The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Chairperson Betty Jo Crosby at the Ada Township Offices, 7330 Thornapple River Dr., Ada, MI.

PRESENT: Dan Bergman, Betty Jo Crosby, Randy Damstra, George Haga, Jamie Ladd, Elise Roe

ABSENT: Paul Leblanc, Rick Steketee, Jeff VandenBerge

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Ferro, Planning Director
Mark Fitzpatrick, Park Director

Crosby introduced new Advisory Board member Dan Bergman.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2011 MEETING

It was moved by Damstra, seconded by Haga, to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2011 meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

STATUS OF PROJECTS

6195 E. Fulton St. Acquisition

Ferro reported that the Vos property acquisition closed on December 21. He also mentioned that he communicated this to the President of the Country Homes of Ada Condominiums, and expressed our interest in discussing possible modifications to the irrigation system piping in the future.

Crosby reported on correspondence she has had with the DEQ regarding obtaining mapping of floodplain boundaries on the Vos property.

Amway Catalog Warehouse Property:

Ferro distributed written correspondence to and from Amway regarding the possibility of a conservation easement being placed on a portion of the Catalog Warehouse property on Spaulding Ave. Ferro stated the response from Amway states they are not interested in placing a conservation easement on the property, given the uncertain future status of the property.

Damstra suggested that he and Haga follow up with Rob Hunter at Amway regarding this.

Gilmore Property Mortgage Release

Ferro reported that the mortgage release from Chemical Bank still needs to be recorded, before we can obtain title insurance on the property.

DISCUSSION OF RACINE PROPERTY AT 4980 KNAPP ST.

The Committee comprised of Haga, VandenBerge and Ladd reported on their meeting with the owner's real estate agent earlier in the week. The Committee reported it is recommending that the Township proceed with conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment, and a "ground-penetrating radar" analysis of the property, in order to assess the likely number and size of any underground fuel tanks, and to more narrowly define the likely costs of environmental response activities.

A proposal from Dixon Environmental Consultants to conduct this work for a fee of \$3,500 was reviewed.

(Note: Ladd arrived at this time, at 4:40 p.m.)

Following discussion, it was moved by Damstra, seconded by Roe, to recommend that the Township engage Dixon to complete a Phase I ESA and ground-penetrating radar, for a fee of \$3,500.

Motion passed unanimously.

MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS:

Crosby reported that a conservation easement, held by the Land Conservancy of West Michigan, has been placed on a portion of the Holiday Farm property by Gene and Tubie Gilmore. She noted that the easement reserves for the owner the right to dedicate a public trail easement along the riverfront in the future.

Haga stated that a trail along the river on the Gilmore property could connect with open space along the river at the rear of the Amway property.

Crosby also brought up the subject of providing some recognition to Randy Van Dragt for his service on the Commission. Ferro stated he would draft a resolution for consideration at next month's meeting.

Fitzpatrick reported he would be attending the Stewardship Network conference next week.

DISCUSSION OF PROJECT PRIORITIES FOR FY 2012-13 BUDGET AND DRAFT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

Ferro requested the Advisory Board to give consideration to marketing/education projects the Board would like to undertake in the coming fiscal year, to provide input into preparing the annual budget. Ferro stated that one possibility was to reprint an upcoming Land Conservancy newsletter article regarding open space preservation projects in the Ada area.

Elise Roe suggested having a "Parade of Easements" event, where the public is invited to visit properties with conservation easements.

(Note: Roe left the meeting at this time).

Budgeting of funds for a sign on Fulton St. identifying the recently acquired property at 6195 East Fulton was suggested.

The consensus of the Advisory Board was that \$10,000 should be included in the budget for marketing and promotion activities, which will be determined at a later date.

Ferro distributed a page from the draft Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) showing projections of future revenues and expenditures from the Parks and Land Preservation fund. He noted that in addition to annual transfers of 42% of the millage revenues to the Parks Fund, a one-time transfer of \$150,000 to the Parks Fund is proposed for two years from now, as an Open Space allocation contribution to completion of the planned Resource Building project at Roselle Park, in the summer of 2013. Ferro asked Board members for input on whether they would support the use of \$150,000 in Open Space funds for this purpose.

The consensus of the Board was that this would be an appropriate expenditure to include in the plan.

Following discussion, it was moved by Haga, seconded by Damstra, to support the proposed Capital Improvements Plan.

Motion passed by a 5-0 vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Burton
Township Clerk
RS: jf