

**ADA TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE MARCH 12, 2009 MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Chairperson Betty Jo Crosby.

PRESENT: Betty Jo Crosby, Randy Damstra, Jamie Ladd, Rick Steketee, Jeff Vandenberg, Elise Roe

ABSENT: George Haga, Mischelle Sytsma, Randy Van Dragt

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

PUBLIC PRESENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 12, 2009 MEETING

It was moved by Ladd, seconded by Steketee, to approve the minutes of the February 12 meeting.

Motion approved unanimously.

STATUS REPORT ON OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROJECTS

a. 383 Pettis Ave. Property Acquisition

Ferro reported that the property is now owned by the Federal National Mortgage Corp. He added that the “Fannie Mae” web site indicates that the only way to make offers on Fannie Mae-owned properties is through a licensed real estate agent, after the property is listed. Ferro also mentioned that the moratorium on evictions that was put in place by Fannie Mae may affect the timing of the property going on the market.

b. Gilmore/MDOT Property on former Thornapple River – Status of Title

Ferro reported no change in the status of obtaining a mortgage release on the property deeded to the Township by John Gilmore. Gilmore’s attorney has returned home. It was suggested that we contact the mortgage holder directly.

4. Status of Potential Projects

a. Conservation Easement on Vanderwarf Family Trust Property at 2025 and 2200 Honey Creek.

Ferro summarized the results of the appraisal supplements for the two properties.

Following discussion of the appraisal results, it was moved by Ladd, seconded by Roe, to recommend that an offer be made to the VanderWarf family for purchase of the development rights on the two properties using a conservation easement, with alternative proposals and purchase prices presented based on varying the number of allowed lot splits/home sites on each of the parcels, using the opinions of value contained in the appraisals prepared for the Township.

Motion passed unanimously.

Ferro stated he would prepare a table presenting the various options and prices, and provide this information to Advisory Board members prior to presenting it to the VanderWarf family.

b. Nominated Property at 5504 Ada Dr.

Randy Damstra was requested to obtain permission for the Advisory Board to conduct a site evaluation of the property at 5504 Ada Drive, as well as the property on the north side of Ada Dr occupied by the Canterbury Creek Pre-School.

- c. Roberts Property at 2455 Pettis Ave.

No new information on this property.

- d. Thornapple River Property at 851 Thornapple River Dr.

Ferro reported he was told by the President of the Thornapple River Association that they were in the process of securing an option to purchase the property at 851 Thornapple River Dr., and that the purchase would be contingent upon approval by the Association membership in April. Ferro stated he indicated to the Association President that the Township would be interested in partnering with them on the purchase, if the Association membership objects to the purchase price.

5. Marketing/Promotion

- a. Request for \$200 toward cost of United Growth Landowner Education Event

Ferro presented a letter received from MSU Extension requesting Ada Township participate in the amount of \$200 toward the estimated \$900 cost of the March 21 "Caring for your Land" educational workshop, which is targeting property owners in Ada, Vergennes and Grattan Township.

It was moved by Damstra, seconded by Roe, to recommend that \$200 be paid to Kent/MSU Extension toward the cost of the March 21 event.

Motion passed unanimously.

- b. Draft Marketing Plan

Work on the actions identified in the Marketing Plan document was discussed, including the status of a new brochure design. The consensus was to continue work on this at the Committee level.

- c. NWF Backyard Habitat Program

Mark Fitzpatrick reported on the status of the NWF Community Habitat Certification effort He reported that about 20 individual properties have received NWF certification, and 100 are needed to obtain the Community certification.

PUBLIC COMMENT There was no public comment.

NEXT MEETING

Given that April 6-10 is Spring Break week, the consensus of the Board was to change the date of the April meeting from Thursday, April 9 to Thursday, April 16, at 4:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Susan Burton
Ada Township Clerk
rs:jf