

**ADA TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE APRIL 12, 2007 MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.

PRESENT: Betty Jo Crosby, Greg Forbes, George Haga, Jamie Ladd, Mischelle Sytsma, Randy VanDragt

ABSENT: Matt Nygren, Bette Roberts, Elise Roe

STAFF PRESENT: Planning Director Jim Ferro

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Moved by Ladd, seconded by Sytsma, to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2007 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL SEIDMAN PARK STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

Dan Delooff, Operations Supervisor at the Kent County Parks Department, was present to discuss with the Advisory Board the possibility and procedure for establishing a volunteer stewardship project to carry out invasive species removal at Seidman Park.

Topics discussed included the need for a liability waiver form to be signed by volunteers, for the protection of both the Parks Department and the Township, limits on use of power equipment, such as chain saws, identifying work locations, access to the Park for removal of cuttings, and coordinating the involvement of Goodwillie Environmental School.

VanDragt suggested involving Melanie Good at the Land Conservancy. Betty Jo Crosby will contact Goodwillie Environmental School about recruiting students and parents. Dan Delooff will provide us with a park map showing locations where garlic mustard and autumn olive are concentrated in the park.

Crosby thanked Delooff for coming to the meeting.

STATUS OF PROPERTIES OF INTEREST:

383 Pettis Ave. Property:

Ferro reported that we recently received the grant agreement for this acquisition project from the State. Ferro was asked to contact the realtor for the property and request a copy of the disclosure statement.

MDOT Property on Fulton St.:

Ferro reported on the results of the title search. The document search indicates that the property actually shown on the tax rolls as being owned by MDOT is actually owned by Poppen and Baer, who were previous owners of the Gilmore property. A portion of the property deeded to the Township in December 2007 by John Gilmore is not owned by Gilmore, but overlaps the MDOT parcel.

We will request Mr. Gilmore, through his attorney Rick Rankin, whether he can help us resolve the ownership issues. Our legal counsel is also assisting.

851 Thornapple River Dr. Property:

Ferro referred to the signed option agreement that has been signed for this property, contained in the Advisory Board members agenda packets. We have ordered an appraisal on the property, which is due

within 30 days. The Thornapple Association has recorded a deed restriction which seeks to restrict public access to the water from surrounding properties. We have referred this to legal counsel.

Haga reported that he has spoken to the DNR about possible funding assistance for a purchase of this property. The DNR would not partner with us and provide any funding unless full boating access were available, including motorized access. The property would also need to be owned by the State, with an operating agreement signed with the Township.

Forbes questioned why we contracted for an appraisal that would take as long as 30 days.

Ladd explained that if the appraisal values the property at under \$350,000, ~~that~~ the lesser of the two amounts (\$350,000 or the appraised value) will be the purchase price, unless the owner wishes to seek his own appraisal, in which case the option agreement is automatically extended.

Forest Bend Dr./Alta Dale Ave. Property:

Ferro reported on the contact from Gary Jaarda, and his offer to sell the property to the Township at a lower price than previously quoted.

Haga and Ferro were directed to respond to Jaarda that the Township is interested in the property, but that we are not in a position to become engaged in this property until a pending acquisition that is in progress is resolved, and that we hope to be in a position to work on this by summer.

STATUS OF NATURAL FEATURES INVENTORY – FINAL REPORT DISTRIBUTION

Ferro reported that the Final Report has been received. The Executive Summary will be put on the Township's web site soon.

MARKETING/PROMOTION

Crosby reported that Craig Crebessa, who has been involved in the Community Wildlife Habitat Program in Belding, will come to a future meeting.

Information on the Champion Tree Contest that is being held jointly with the Vergennes Township Open Space Committee was provided by Ferro and Crosby. In addition, promotion materials for the Photography Contest and Exhibit being held by the Eastern Townships Open Space Committee, comprised of representatives from Ada, Cannon, Cascade, Grattan, Lowell and Vergennes Townships.

MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Respectfully submitted:

Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC
Ada Township Clerk
rs:jf