

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

A regular meeting of the Open Space Preservation Advisory Board was held on Thursday, April 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:** Betty Jo Crosby, Randy Damstra, George Haga, Jamie Ladd, Elise Roe, Rick Steketee, Jeff VandenBerge

**ABSENT:** Dan Bergman, Paul Leblanc

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

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MARCH 8, 2012 MEETING**

Ladd stated that the wording of the motion on the first page concerning the Board's recommendation on cost-sharing with the Road Commission should have the words "be approved" added at the end of the motion. It was moved by Ladd, seconded by Steketee, to approve the March 8 minutes subject to the corrections noted by Ladd.

Motion passed unanimously.

**STATUS OF PROJECTS.**

Racine Property at 4980 Knapp St.

Ferro reported there have been no further negotiations with the property owner on a possible purchase price. Ferro stated he has discussed with the realtor the removal of all of the siding from the home on the property, and was told that this was done by a family member of the owner, without the owner's knowledge.

Ferro was asked whether the plastic barrels that are scattered in the floodplain between the home and the river are on the Racine property. Ferro stated they are on a neighboring property. Ferro was asked to look into whether these barrels are any type of an environmental hazard.

Cooper Property

Ferro reported he spoke with Dick Cooper several weeks ago, and Dick indicated he would be in touch with us some time after he returns to Michigan this month.

Carl Creek Headwaters Protection

Haga reported that Amway is currently considering a possible change in use of the catalog warehouse facility, and that any decision on a conservation easement on the property is unlikely until the future use of the property is determined.

Carl Creek Crossing Preserve:

A 3-member subcommittee consisting of Roe, Crosby and Steketee was appointed to work with Ferro and Fitzpatrick to develop a plan for public access improvements to the Carl Creek Crossing property.

**MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS/REPORTS**

Damstra reported that the 320-acre Rieth-Riley property is now listed for sale. A 4-member subcommittee consisting of Haga, Ladd, Damstra and VandenBerge was appointed to study whether consideration should be given to pursuing public acquisition of the property for parks, recreation and open space preservation purposes, potentially in partnership with the Kent County Parks department. Damstra suggested having a lunch meeting of the subcommittee and inviting Roger Sabine, Kent County Parks Director.

Fulton St. Identification Sign for Carl Creek Crossing Preserve:

Ferro presented a proposal from Carlson Design to fabricate and install a 20 square foot sign identifying the Carl Creek Crossing Preserve property, to be installed on the Fulton St. frontage of the property. The cost of the sign would be \$2,040. Ferro noted that the sign is proposed to be single-faced, and would be facing westbound traffic. He stated that given the width of the highway median, the sign would likely not be legible from the eastbound lanes.

Ferro presented to alternative text layouts for the sign. Consensus of the Board was to use the version with larger text for the Preserve name.

Following discussion, it was moved by Haga, seconded by Roe, to approve the proposal from Carlson Design.

Motion passed unanimously.

Upcoming Stewardship Dates:

Fitzpatrick reported that the following stewardship activities have been scheduled:

Carl Creek Wetland Preserve Stewardship: April 26

Carl Creek Crossing Preserve Stewardship: May 10

Garlic Mustard Pull at Kent County Parks, including Seidman Park: May 5

**MARKETING/PROMOTION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Steketee reported on the Committee meeting that was held on April 7, and distributed a summary of the Committee's discussion. Committee members who attended were Crosby, Roe, Leblanc and Steketee.

Roe reported she was not able to find Open Space Preservation-related information on the Township web site. Haga stated we would have our web consultant look into this, and that a meeting could be arranged with her, if needed.

Roe stated that the Ottawa County web site has very useful information that highlights the differences between park and open space lands, and suggested using it as an example of how our site could be improved.

Steketee stated Leblanc commented at the meeting that the open space table display material could be improved, with photos that feature people actively using open space rather than just passive photos of land.

Damstra suggested that we establish a formal relationship with Goodwillie Environmental School. Crosby noted that we do have a working relationship with them in conducting volunteer autumn olive removal annually at the Goodwillie campus and at adjoining Seidman Park.

Crosby also mentioned the ongoing relationship that Mark Fitzpatrick has built with Forest Hills Eastern Middle School through the Groundswell grants program.

Fitzpatrick pointed out that effective stewardship at school properties needs to be based on more than just volunteer efforts, and that it needs to be built into the property management programs and budgets at the school district administration level.

Steketee stated it will be important for the open space program to have materials that educate the public on the program's value at the time of the millage expiration and renewal in 2017.

Damstra suggested we should be using social media to a greater degree, and that most of our emphasis and resources should be focused on digital social media rather than print media.

Steketee stated that based on data he has seen regarding older age groups' use of digital media that we should not abandon print media entirely, but find a proper balance between the two.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Susan Burton  
Township Clerk  
RS: jf