

**ADA TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE JUNE 9, 2011 MEETING**

A regular meeting of the Open Space Preservation Advisory Board was held on Thursday, June 9, 2011. 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, George Haga, Elise Roe, Rick Steketee, Jeff VandenBerge

ABSENT: Randy Damstra, Jamie Ladd, Mischelle Sytsma, Randy VanDragt

STAFF PRESENT: Jim Ferro, Planning Director

PUBLIC PRESENT: None

It was noted that there was not a quorum present for either the May 12 or the May 20 meetings. Therefore, there are no official minutes to approve from those meetings.

Members suggested that some record be kept of the fact that a meeting was held with no official business conducted.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 14, 2011 MEETING MINUTES

It was moved by Roe, seconded by VandenBerge, to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2011 meeting as presented. Motion passed by 5-0 vote.

ANNUAL REPORT TO TOWNSHIP BOARD

Crosby and Ferro presented a draft Annual Report to the Township Board, summarizing activities and accomplishments in the open space preservation program in the previous fiscal year. In review of the draft, members suggested that specific properties be referred to by address rather than by owner's name.

It was moved by Haga, seconded by Steketee, to approve the Annual Report to the Township Board, subject to changing references to specific properties to address instead of owner name.

Motion passed by 5-0 vote.

STATUS OF PROJECTS

a. Vos Property

Ferro reported on the status of discussions with the Country Homes of Ada Condominium Association regarding the possible abandonment by the Association of the irrigation water withdrawal system on the property, and development of an alternate source of irrigation water, either by drilling a private well or connecting to the public water system. Ferro noted that information was provided to the Association on the costs of connecting to public water and the water usage rates.

Ferro stated that the Association Board believes a majority vote of the Association membership is needed to abandon the irrigation system easement. Ferro added that since a full meeting of the membership is not scheduled until September, we will need another extension of our option agreement with the property owner.

The consensus of the Board was that no action need be taken at this time.

b. Bottrall Property Acquisition

Ferro reported that bids are being taken soon on the demolition of the residence on the property. Ferro stated he is considering dropping plans to have the contractor remove buried refuse, due to the unknowns as to location and amount. The Advisory Board members concurred with doing so.

c. Cooper Property on Bailey Dr.

Ferro reported on communications with Mr. Cooper and with his consultant forester, Ferro distributed a written communication from the forester, Jack Bos, regarding the timber harvesting that is underway on the property. Ferro stated that the forester is monitoring the logging activity and believes that the work that is being done will improve the quality of the timber stand, and that he is cognizant of the need to protect the aquatic features on the property.

The consensus of the Board was that visits to the property following completion of the logging should be conducted.

d. VanderWarf Property.

Ferro reported that a 5-acre portion of the VanderWarf property on the west side of Honey Creek Ave. was acquired by an adjoining property owner to the north, and that another portion was added to the back of family members' lots on 2 Mile Rd. Ferro noted that the remainder of the site that was of interest to a possible buyer for agricultural use remains largely intact. Ferro also stated that an appraisal was being conducted on the property on the east side of Honey Creek Ave.

e. VanderBoon Property at 1780 Grand River Dr.

Ferro reported we have not yet heard back from the owner regarding a possible asking price for his property.

f. Gilmore Property Donation, Need for Mortgage Release

Ferro reported no activity on obtaining the mortgage release.

g. Site Visit to Bielema Property

Ferro and Crosby reported on the site visit they made to the Bielema property, accompanied by Dr. Dave Warners from Calvin College, on Tuesday, June 7. The written subcommittee report summarizing the group's observations and findings was referenced.

Ferro suggested that any action whether to continue discussion with the owner regarding possible purchase be postponed, given the minimal quorum present at the meeting.

SIGNAGE FOR 383 PETTIS PROPERTY AND BOTTRALL PROPERTY

Ferro presented a proposal from Carlson Design to provide identification signs for the 383 Pettis Ave. property and the Bottrall property. Ferro suggested the name "Grand River View Preserve" on the sign for the Pettis Ave. property, and invited suggestions from Board members for a name for the Grand River Dr. property. "Carl Creek Crossing Preserve" was suggested and approved by consensus of the Board.

It was moved by Haga, seconded by Roe, to authorize expenditure of \$1,800 for signs identifying the two properties. Motion approved by 5-0 vote.

STATUS OF PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE

Ferro noted that some additional 2010 Census data has been received, concerning age distribution of the population, which permits some additional progress to be made on the Parks Plan update. Ferro stated that the schedule calls for the Plan to be submitted to the DNR by the end of the year.

STEWARDSHIP PLANS FOR OPEN SPACE PROPERTIES; STATUS OF CONTRACT SERVICES WITH LAND CONSERVANCY

Ferro reported that both of the above tasks still need to be completed. He noted he spoke recently with April Scholtz of the Land Conservancy, who stated she would discuss a proposed contract with the Land Conservancy Executive Director.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Burton
Township Clerk
RS: jf