

**ADA TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2014 MEETING**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Betty Jo Crosby at 4:05 p.m.

Members present: Bergman (4:20 pm), Crosby, Damstra (4:10 pm), Ladd, LeBlanc, Roe, Steketee and VandenBerge

Absent: Haga

Staff present: Planning Director Ferro, Parks Director Fitzpatrick

Public present: Bernie Veldkamp, Troy Tingley

Crosby suggested moving the agenda item concerning the 2231 Shady Dr. property up on the agenda, to accommodate the interested party present at the meeting. The agenda as revised was approved by consent.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JULY 10, 2014 MEETING:**

It was moved by Roe, seconded by VandenBerge, to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2014 meeting, subject to correction of the phrase “ he proved a copy” to read “he provided a copy,” in the first sentence under Status of Projects, Cooper Property Conservation Easement. Motion passed by unanimously.

(Note: Damstra arrived at 4:10 p.m.)

**INQUIRY FROM TROY TINGLEY REGARDING PURCHASE OF 2231 SHADY DR. PROPERTY**

Ferro provided background information regarding the Township’s purchase of the tax-foreclosed property at 2231 Shady Dr. from Kent County. Ferro reviewed provisions of the State property tax law which provide a first right of refusal to the State government and to the local government to acquire tax-foreclosed property, before it is sold at public auction. Ferro noted the Township received correspondence from the County Treasurer’s office on April 23, offering the property to the Township, and that the property was evaluated and approved for acquisition by this Advisory Board and the Township Board. Ferro stated a quit claim deed to the Township was recorded on July 25. Ferro stated that the property was probably included in the public notice of properties to be auctioned, but was taken off the auction after the Township acquisition took place.

Troy Tingley, 2201 Shady Dr., described the efforts he had made over the last two years to acquire the property from the prior owner. He stated he attended the August 1 County auction with the intent of bidding on the property, and learned at that time of the Township having purchased the property. He stated that he had previously mentioned his interest in acquiring the property to several individuals in the Township office over the past several months, and does not understand why he was not given the opportunity to acquire the property.

(Note: Bergman arrived at 4:20 p.m.)

He stated he has been using the property as part of his yard since he purchased his property in 2012. He noted he previously purchased one additional vacant lot next to his original property.

Tingley requested the Board to reconsider its purchase of the 2231 Shady Dr. property and consider selling it to him.

In Board discussion, it was noted that provisions of the Township’s open space preservation ordinance require a 2/3 vote of the Township Board membership and approval by a margin of 75% in a Township election, of the sale of open space property acquired by the Township with open space preservation funds.

Ferro suggested that prior to making a recommendation on this item, the property boundaries should be physically located and marked and a site visit conducted by the Advisory Board or a subcommittee of the Board.

Fitzpatrick raised the question whether a sale of the property by the Township would require an advertised

bidding process to allow any interested party the opportunity to bid on it.

Following discussion, it was moved by LeBlanc, seconded by Ladd, to authorize having a survey of the lot boundaries completed.

Motion passed unanimously.

### **STATUS OF PROJECTS:**

Ferro and Fitzpatrick made brief comments on the items contained in Ferro's written update memo to the Advisory Board. A subcommittee comprised of Roe, VandenBerge and Crosby was appointed to work with staff in developing a plan for landscape improvements at the Township-owned site at the corner of Knapp St. and Grand River Dr. (4950 Knapp St.)

### **STATUS OF CARL CREEK CROSSING PRESERVE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT AND CULVERT REPLACEMENT**

Ferro referred to the correspondence from Trevor Bosworth contained in the Board packets regarding the status of the project. Ferro stated the soil borings and boundary survey work are behind schedule, and that the boardwalk and bridge design cannot be completed and the DEQ permit application submitted until the soil boring report is received. Ferro noted Bosworth's comments regarding the unfavorable bidding climate that currently exists, and that given the lateness of the year and the high bid prices that are being experienced, we may wish to consider delaying bidding until winter, for construction next spring.

Ferro also noted the updated cost estimate prepared by Bosworth which is now below our original estimates, based on the elimination of paved parking and curb and gutter which were included in the preliminary design.

Ferro stated there is no action needed at this time. He pointed out that once the DEQ permit is issued for boardwalk and bridge construction, it will be valid for at least a year.

### **PROPOSED FINANCING PLAN FOR ENVISION ADA PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS**

Ferro presented information to the Advisory Board regarding the proposed financing plan for public improvements in the Village that was presented to the Township Board, DDA Board and the public this past Monday, and noted that it includes a proposed allocation of \$200,000 in open space preservation funds toward the overall project. Ferro stated that the specific use of the funds has not yet been determined, but that it would likely be focused on the public open space corridor along the Thornapple River or other public space proposed in the Envision Ada Plan. The \$200,000 in open space funds would be part of a total Township funding commitment of \$6.5 million, matched by about \$6.5 million in funding from Amway and from a community fundraising effort. Ferro stated there is a lengthy process for formal implementation of the financing plan, and that the Advisory Board's recommendation regarding the \$200,000 participation by the open space preservation fund will be requested in the future.

Crosby asked who was involved in preparing the proposed financing plan. Ferro stated it was developed by a working group consisting of the Township Supervisor, DDA Chairman, himself and Township bond counsel.

LeBlanc pointed out that there is an estimated \$70 million in private investment in new development in the Village expected through the implementation of the Envision Ada plan, and that this would be a very good "return on investment" from the public expenditure on new infrastructure and civic space in the plan. It was also noted that the proposed \$5.3 million bond issue would be paid back in part by a millage of 1.5 mills levied within the DDA district, and that 79.5% of the millage collected would come from properties owned by Amway or Amway-related entities.

Ferro stated more details would be provided to the Advisory Board in the near future regarding the proposed use of the \$200,000 in open space funds, before a recommendation from the Advisory Board is sought.

**SCHEDULE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS:**

Fitzpatrick noted the following upcoming events that provide volunteer opportunities:

September 27: Grand River Festival at Roselle Park

October 7: Stewardship outing for invasives removal at Carl Creek Crossing Preserve

October 21: Stewardship outing for invasives removal at Carl Creek Wetland Preserve

**PROCESS AND SCHEDULE FOR UPDATING THE PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN**

Ferro and Fitzpatrick reviewed a proposed schedule for updating the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, with final approval of the plan by the Township Board scheduled for early February, in advance of the March 1 deadline established by the Michigan DNR in order to have grant eligibility for the April 1, 2015 grant application deadline.

Ferro suggested that the planning process would be expedited by having a joint subcommittee from the Advisory Board and the Parks Committee to work with staff on the planning process. Advisory Board members Steketee, Bergman and VandenBerge volunteered for this group.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was no public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Crosby noted that there may be a need to call a special meeting in October. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Susan Burton Township Clerk  
RS: jf