

**ADA TOWNSHIP  
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 1, 2006 MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Betty Jo Crosby, Greg Forbes, George Haga, Jamie Ladd, Matt Nygren, Mischelle Sytsma, Randy Van Dragt.

**ABSENT:** Bette Roberts, Elise Roe

**STAFF PRESENT:** Planning Director Jim Ferro and Parks Director Wendy Tatar

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Moved by Sytsma, seconded by Nygren, to approve the minutes of the October 26 meeting.

**STATUS REPORT ON PROPERTIES OF INTEREST**

Ada Hospital for Animals Property

Haga reported that the Township Board has approved the purchase of 17.5 acres from the Ada Hospital for animals, adjacent to Roselle Park. A Phase I environmental assessment has been ordered. Once this is complete, and assuming no environmental problems, the goal is to close on the property by the end of the year.

383 Pettis Ave. Property

Ferro distributed correspondence from the Michigan State Police stating that they are waiting on funding availability from FEMA. FEMA Headquarters has not released the Fiscal Year 2006 grant funds yet. The correspondence notes that FEMA Region is ready to award the grant when the funds are released to the region by FEMA Headquarters.

Gilmore Property on Fulton St.

Ferro reported that he had approached John Gilmore's representative, Rick Rankin, with the idea of Mr. Gilmore conveying the ownership of the 2.3 acres of land along the Thornapple River to the Township, instead of conveying a conservation easement, and Mr. Gilmore is willing to do this. A letter from Mr. Rankin outlining this proposal was distributed. Ferro stated that the proposed donation would be on the December 11 Township Board agenda for acceptance.

It was moved by Haga, seconded by Van Dragt, to recommend that the Township Board accept the donated property. Motion passed. It was suggested that a resolution recognizing Mr. Gilmore for his donation should be drafted once the closing documents have been signed.

Other Properties of Interest

Haga stated that Gary Jaarda had stopped in the office recently, and indicated he would consider any other offer we wished to make.

**NATURAL FEATURES INVENTORY PUBLIC PRESENTATION RESULTS**

The November 29 public presentation by Dr. Dave Warners on the results of the natural features inventory conducted this past summer was discussed. Ferro stated he was disappointed with the lack of news media attendance at the event. Haga stated that he wished more property owners would have participated in the inventory.

How the information from the inventory might be used by the Township in guiding open space protection efforts was discussed. Ladd suggested that we may want to re-examine our open space protection plan priorities, in light of the inventory information, and act on the results in a proactive way, rather than waiting for property owners to come to us.

The need to coordinate our efforts more effectively with the Land Conservancy of West Michigan was discussed. Ferro noted that the grant proposal he wrote for the Natural Features Inventory calls for the Final Report to be shared with the Land Conservancy.

Inviting a representative from the Land Conservancy to attend our meetings was suggested as a possible way to increase collaboration with the Land Conservancy.

### **MARKETING/PROMOTION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Betty Jo Crosby stated she had discussed the idea of organizing a stewardship partnership at Seidman Park with Rick Gillette at the Goodwillie Environmental School, and Rick was very enthusiastic about the idea. She noted that Elise Roe was trying to reach Roger Sabine at Kent County Parks to discuss the idea.

The idea of starting with Roselle Park as a demonstration project was suggested by Haga. Wendy Tatar stated this could be organized next spring.

### **MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS**

Ferro noted that a reprint of a letter written years ago by author Wallace Stegner regarding the importance of wilderness, provided to us by Sue Steketee, was included in the meeting packets.

Haga asked members to think about budget needs for the next fiscal year, for the Advisory Board's operations.

### **SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING:**

Crosby suggested either January 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> as the date for the next meeting. She will set the date after talking to Greg Forbes about his class schedule next semester.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Deborah Ensing Millhuff, CMC  
Ada Township Clerk

rs:jf