

**ADA TOWNSHIP
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 11, 2008 MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Chairperson Betty Jo Crosby.

PRESENT: Betty Jo Crosby, Randy Damstra, George Haga, Jamie Ladd, Rick Steketee, Mischelle Sytsma, Jeff Vandenberg, Randy VanDragt

ABSENT: Elise Roe

STAFF PRESENT: Planning Director Jim Ferro

PUBLIC PRESENT: Ron Isbeque, John Westra

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 13, 2008 MEETING AND DECEMBER 1, 2008 SPECIAL MEETING

It was moved by Sytsma, seconded by VanDragt, to approve the minutes of the November 13 meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

It was moved by Haga, seconded by Sytsma, to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2008 special meeting. Motion approved unanimously.

Jeff Vandenberg arrived at the meeting at this time.

STATUS REPORT ON OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROJECTS

1. Completion of Boundary Marker Installation at Carl Creek Wetland Preserve

The consensus of the Board was to complete the boundary marker installation in the spring.

2. 383 Pettis Ave. Property Acquisition

Ferro reported there has been no change in the inability to obtain mortgage company consent to our purchase offer. The Federal grant expires in the Spring of 2010. Ferro will look into whether it can be extended.

Damstra stated that it was unlikely that the mortgage companies would approve a "short sale," if the owner is current on the mortgage payments.

Ladd suggested contacting the Health Department to have the sanitary waste holding tank inspected.

- 3.. Gilmore/MDOT Property on former Thornapple River – Status of Title

Ferro reported we have not yet obtained the mortgage release on the property donated to the Township by John Gilmore.

STATUS OF POTENTIAL PROJECTS

1. Conservation Easement at Raj and Sunita Agrawal Property at 3201 Egypt Valley Ave.

Ferro reported that the Township Board approved accepting the conservation easement on the Agrawal property. We do not yet know whether the Agrawal's will proceed with the easement.

Haga reported he has asked the Township Assessor to provide him with information on the property assessment implications of the easement, if it is completed.

Ladd asked if he could participate in any meetings with the Assessor. Ladd also suggested that in the future, the Township retain control of the drafting of the easement document. Ferro stated he didn't believe that one party preparing an initial draft of an easement constitutes the other party losing control of the process.

The suggestion was made that we should have a "template" easement document for use in the future.

2. Conservation Easement on Vanderwarf Family Trust Property at 2025 and 2200 Honey Creek.

The completed appraisals for the Vanderwarf property were discussed. Ferro reported that a meeting with the appraiser has been scheduled to discuss several concerns he has with the appraisal analysis.

3. Nominated Property at 5504 Ada Dr. and Roberts Property at 2455 Pettis Ave.

Ferro reported that neither of these two properties has had a preliminary evaluation conducted. VanDragt stated that some time within the next two weeks to walk the Roberts property would fit his schedule.

Ron Isbeque asked whether we had heard from Amway regarding the property on Ada Drive.

Haga responded that we have not contacted Amway about the property, so there has been no input from them.

John Westra asked if we have compared the property near the water tower to the property on the north side of Ada Drive, south of the Central Woodlands school campus.

Crosby noted that the focus and priority of the Open Space Advisory Board is on open space, not necessarily on parks.

Damstra suggested that the Open Space Advisory Board should prioritize the Amway-owned properties that we are interested in, in order of importance.

5. Marketing/Promotion

1. Possible Joint Public Information Meeting with Vergennes Township and United Growth for Kent County.

Crosby reported that effort is still underway to meet jointly with Vergennes Township open space committee representatives and Kendra Wills, to plan an event this winter.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Susan Burton
Ada Township Clerk
rs:jf