

**ADA TOWNSHIP OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 12, 2013 MEETING**

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

Members present: Crosby, Damstra, Haga, Ladd, and Steketee

Absent: Bergman, LeBlanc, Roe, VandenBerge

Staff present: Planning Director Ferro, Parks Director Fitzpatrick

Public Present, Bernie Veldkamp

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 14, 2013 MEETING:

It was moved by Steketee, seconded by Damstra, to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2013 meeting as presented.

Motion passed by 4-0 vote, with Ladd abstaining, stating he was not present at the meeting.

STATUS OF PROJECTS

a. Fase St. Properties

Ferro reported he and Haga met recently with Bruce Fase to discuss potential property acquisition. Ferro stated that the two parties shared the results of appraisals each has had performed for the property, and that Mr. Fase offered a selling price that is much higher than either of the appraisals. The consensus of the Board was that no further negotiations were warranted at this time.

b. 980 Buttrick Ave

Ferro reported that the demolition of the home and outbuildings at 980 Buttrick Ave SE has been completed, along with topsoil placement and rough grading. Ferro stated that finish grading and seeding still needs to be completed, and with the recent winter weather, this would probably not be completed until spring. Ferro recommended that 10% of the contract amount be retained pending completion of the site restoration.

Following discussion, it was moved by Ladd, seconded by Steketee, to recommend payment of 90% of the contract amount to Pitch Companies, pending completion of site restoration in the spring.

Motion passed unanimously.

Fitzpatrick reported that recent conversation with members of the Grochawalski family regarding their property between 980 Buttrick and Ada Township Park indicates they would be interested in selling the rear portion of their property to the Township.

c. Potential Property Acquisition at 149 Pettis Ave NE

Ferro reported he has received no response to several phone messages left with the property owner. Consensus of the Board was no reason to pursue this further.

CONSIDER ELECTRICAL SERVICE RE-LOCATION PROPOSAL FROM CONSUMERS ENERGY

Ferro presented mapping of alternative routes for providing electrical service to the irrigation pump system on the Carl Creek Crossing Preserve property. He stated that a route that would extend a new overhead line along the Fulton St. frontage of the property and angling northeast through an open meadow on the site to connect to an existing pole would have less impact on natural features of the property than the option of running a new line from the property frontage directly north to the pump house.

Ferro notes that the correspondence from Consumers Energy indicated that some trimming of existing evergreen trees along the Fulton St. frontage would be needed with the preferred route, compared to removal of a 30-foot wide swath of evergreen trees in order to run a new service line directly north to the pump house. It was pointed out that the new overhead service would be more visible from the road than is currently the case.

In discussion, members questioned whether the Township should entertain any relocation proposal without some consideration from Consumers Energy. The suggestion of requesting the new service to be placed underground was made, to minimize visual impact and eliminate the need for tree trimming. The consensus of the Board was that the Township should request burial of a new service line from the existing utility pole adjacent to the Township's sanitary sewer pump station to the final pole where the drop to the irrigation pump house is located.

CONSIDER POTENTIAL COST SHARING OF CONSERVATION EASEMENT APPRAISAL ON COOPER PROPERTY

Ferro stated that since the November meeting, he has obtained a second appraisal proposal. He noted that he recently informed one of the appraisers of the fact that the Cooper properties involve parcels in two different school districts, and that this would affect the scope and cost of the appraisal assignment. He stated that the second respondent is out-of-town and not reachable until next week, so he has not been able to provide this party with the same information. Ferro stated he did not think action should be taken until the second appraiser is provided with the information regarding school districts, and given an opportunity to modify his proposal.

Ladd stated that aside from this issue, he had other concerns with proceeding with an appraisal. He stated that best practice suggested by the Land Trust Alliance was that a conservation easement document should be near final drafting before an appraisal is conducted, and we have not negotiated easement terms with the owner. He also questioned whether an appraisal ordered by the Township, with costs shared jointly with the owner would be accepted by the IRS if used by the property owner for tax deduction purposes.

Following discussion, it was moved by Haga, seconded by Ladd, to postpone action on selecting an appraiser.

Motion passed unanimously.

Note: Steketee left the meeting at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Burton Township Clerk
RS: jf