

MINUTES OF THE OPEN LANDS PLANNING AD HOC PANEL OF THE VILLAGE OF METTAWA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT THE HOUR OF 7:30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, JULY 29, 2014, IN THE MAPLE BOARDROOM OF THE HILTON GARDEN INN HOTEL, 26225 N. RIVERWOODS BOULEVARD, METTAWA, ILLINOIS.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bohm called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Upon a call of the roll, the following persons were:

Present: Chairman Bohm and Members Cohn, Johnson and Lys, Sheldon and Stephenson

Absent: Member Weiland

Also present: Former Mayor Jess Ray, Tom Hines, Carol Armstrong, Peter Ritsos, Kathy Rand, Tim Towne, Mark Meluso and Lilli Cohn, all residents; Bob Irvin, Village Administrator; Colleen Liberacki, Deputy Village Clerk. Chairman Bohm declared there was a quorum.

C. Review and approval of minutes from the May 27 and June 24, 2014 meetings.

Member Sheldon moved to accept the minutes of May 27, 2014 as presented and Member Cohn seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Member Sheldon moved to accept the minutes of June 24, 2014 as presented and Member Johnson seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

D. SELECTION OF THE OPEN LANDS PLANNING FIRM AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE BOARD

Chairman Bohm presented a table summary that Member Lys created, containing each individual member's vote for one of the four vendors that participated in the presentation on Saturday, July 19, 2014 at the Committee of the Whole meeting. Member Johnson noted that everyone made their decision independently after the COW meeting. The table indicated overwhelming confidence with WRD Environmental and Jay Womack. Chairman Bohm asked for discussion. The one vote from Conserve Lake County was also converted to WRD Environmental. Member Sheldon suggested that Stephen Christy be considered in addition to WRD Environmental, due to his long history with Mettawa. Member Johnson was also interested in that prospect, since Stephen Christy was located in the Lake Forest/Mettawa area and had an ongoing long-term association with Deerpath Farms and the Lake County Forest Preserve. Chairman Bohm offered to call Stephen Christy to see if he was open to that possibility of working with WRD Environmental on this project.

Kathy Rand asked about the financial implications of the project, to which Member Sheldon replied that their task initially was to select an open land-planning firm, and that detail had not yet been addressed. Jess Ray suggested that if this is the group's direction, they should set up the framework for WRD in their approach, by stating the desire to have Stephen Christy work with them as a subcontractor and WRD Environmental could take the lead.

Member Johnson agreed with this suggestion, noting the benefit that Christy could easily bring WRD up to speed with the history of Mettawa. Chairman Bohm surveyed numerous attendees after the COW meeting and came away with the feeling that WRD made the best presentation. Member Stephenson liked that WRD wanted people to enjoy the land and interact, not just admire its physical beauty. She further stated that Mettawa had nice pieces of property and in a maturing community such as Mettawa, it was not necessary to have playgrounds, but likes the ideas of walking trails. Member Stephenson also noted that WRD had some unique ideas that also preserved beauty and native plants, as well as becoming part of nature. Kathy Rand thought Jess Ray had a thoughtful analysis.

Jess Ray agreed with Member Stephenson and in his past experience as the mayor, he could appreciate the “total system thinking” philosophy that runs their business. He elaborated by stating in the land planning, WRD considers the changes and/or consequences elsewhere before implementing the plan in another part of the village. He further valued that they had extensive grant writing experience and thought it prudent to acquire a 501c3 status to pursue some of the grants. Jess Ray liked WRD’s idea to use the village to create conservation easements and had ideas how to prevent future changes that might reverse the easements. He furthermore noted what stood out was that Jay Womak talked about partnering with the residents, volunteerism, and was especially experienced dealing with corporate entities to gain cooperation pursuing public/private projects and developing relationships.

Chairman Bohm noted that the WRD website focused much on restoration and land preservation, whereas Teska was more focused on urban planning. He was very impressed that Jay Womak discussed the life cycle cost estimation, as no one else did. Member Stephenson was in agreement about the partnership approach of WRD. Kathy Rand thought that in addition to being a good presenter, he handled the numerous questions well. Jess Ray stressed the importance of not just getting the input from the residents, but being able to distill the information and communicate it well. He referenced to Stephen Christy who had a degree in English, in addition to being a landscape architect.

It was moved by Member Stephenson, and seconded by Member Sheldon to recommend to the Village Board that they select WRD Environmental as the village open land planner with Stephen Christy, landscape architect, as a subcontractor. The motion was carried.

Member Cohn inquired whom WRD and Christy would report to, to which Chairman Bohm replied that they would report to the Open Lands Ad Hoc Panel. Jess Ray suggested that Chairman Bohm write up the request that would be put to the village board and thought that Mayor Urlacher would give him the opportunity to take questions. Jess Ray also inquired about any indication how the job would be bid. Chairman Bohm wanted to complete this task and then would focus on the next step by putting together a plan. Carol Armstrong inquired about a budget, to which Member Johnson stated that after the vendor was determined, and then the budget would be addressed. Carol Armstrong cautioned that WRD was experienced in writing grants, but inquired who would manage them. Member Sheldon said that MOLA could likely manage the grants.

Jess Ray noted that the village board could approve their recommendation, but it would not move forward without funding. Member Sheldon felt that after the selection process, they

could work with the village board to develop the open land plan funding. Chairman Bohm was confident that when he talked to WRD Environmental, that they could come up with a proposal and costs for the next steps to present to the village board. He further suggested that he would ask Jay Womak to accompany him on a tour of the village properties, to which Jess Ray agreed. Member Johnson thought WRD should be informed how much material (maps, surveys, etc.) the village has already gathered.

E. DISCUSS UTILIZING THE AUGUST VILLAGE PICNIC TO SOLICIT RESIDENTS ABOUT OPEN LANDS INPUT

Chairman Bohm suggested setting up an easel or table that would be staffed to collect input and comments from the village residents. Member Johnson noted that he saw the chalkboard in Glenco that Teska was referring to in the COW meeting and it was being used to solicit comments. Member Sheldon suggested utilizing the village website to solicit comments in addition to their presence at the picnic. She also cautioned that the picnic planners were stressing that it was to be fun, not political or solicitous.

Chairman Bohm asked for other thought starters, perhaps an enlarged village map showing all the acquired properties, or a flip chart. Jess Ray suggested that to be accessible, the panel members should have name tags with the panel name also designated and was willing to lend his 10'x10' tent for the activity. Chairman Bohm offered to staff the table/tent/easel for part of the time, but would like someone else to help as well. Member Sheldon suggested T&T in Libertyville to enlarge the map, and Chairman Bohm suggested smaller copies for handouts. Jess Ray suggested road level pictures also of the open spaces. Tom Hines and Member Cohn volunteered to help Chairman Bohm with the details and will also check with Mayor Urlacher if this activity was appropriate.

F. DISCUSS MOLA PROPOSAL COMMENCING WORK ON THE WETLANDS AT RT. 60 AND RIVERWOODS ROAD

Chairman Bohm received an email from MOLA about their desire to work on the SE corner of Route 60 & Riverwoods Road. He asked others for input and felt that that location was not the neediest priority for committing resources. Member Stephenson stated that if it was volunteers offering their services, that it should be welcomed. Member Johnson noted that MOLA wanted a restoration project and lots of buckthorn needed to be removed from this location. Jess Ray cautioned that part of that property is under the control of the Army Corps of Engineers and MOLA should find out which part is their responsibility. Member Sheldon reminded those present that MOLA is a separate entity from Open Land Planning Ad Hoc Panel, and as volunteers, they decide which project to apply their resources.

Member Johnson wanted to restore the land and will consult with Conserve Lake County for advice. Jess Ray suggested that they partner with Costco, since their property generates an abundance of teasel, which spreads to the Mettawa site. Tom Hines inquired which part of the village administration would coordinate the effort, to which Jess Ray replied that it might be up to interpretation, but it is likely that the Public Works Committee would be involved. At this point, Chairman Bohm realized that there was no reason to consider the MOLA request, since it would be dealing with the Public Works Committee. Member Cohn noted that if all the buckthorn was removed, the Costco building would become more visible. Member Stephenson stated that she appreciated the MOLA effort and that the panel was informed of their activities.

G. UPDATE ON PLANNED TRAIL ADDITIONS/EXPANSIONS

Chairman Bohm shared the following status: 1) the trail from Deerpath Farm west to St. Mary's Road and north of Route 60 was approved and is proceeding; 2) a cement trail on the south end along Everett Road west to St. Mary's Road on the north side is planned for next year; 3) Oasis Park trail on Bradley Road is planned; and 4) CDW building east over toll road along Lake Forest property into Middlefork Savanna trail extension is also being planned.

Member Cohn noted that his definition of open land is "undeveloped", however, he sees trails and projects and asked if at a point in time that nothing would be done, i.e. an end date? Tom Hines noted that there was a plan in place already. Chairman Bohm explained that there will always be maintenance to restoring properties, trail maintenance and invasive removal, such as the lifecycle cost that WRD suggested. Member Stephenson stated that if you want the land to look rustic, like nothing has been done, that it takes work to do that. Chairman Bohm further explained that some of the village properties would likely have nothing done to them. Jess Ray shared that the village never set a capital budget for the ongoing maintenance and felt that the establishment of this panel was a step in the right direction. He reminded the group that the resident survey indicated that they wanted the rustic look to their properties, which takes money. He further stated that initially they were focusing on one property at a time and the overall plan is best. Chairman Bohm referenced Deerpath Farm as the best example of long range planning, which is what the village of Mettawa needs.

H. UPDATE ON WHIPPOORWILL FARM

Chairman Bohm advised the group that the planting was done and the shrubs and trees are established. He stated that ILM was herbiciding and cutting teasel, but should remove it and not leave it there to reseed. He stated that he had emailed Tim Towne and advised him of the situation. Chairman Bohm noted the nice variety of trees and the dead trees were also important, providing a habitat for the red-headed woodpecker he sighted. He suggested at some time hiring a botanist to survey the prairie, savannah and woodlands to evaluate the natives, their survival rate and identify the trees and shrubs. Member Sheldon thought that it is still too early.

I. DISCUSS OASIS PARK DESIGN AND STATUS

Chairman Bohm stated that the berm is nearly finished and the next step is to remove some of the tree stumps, and then a planting plan could be put together, perhaps as part of the open land planner activity.

J. UPDATE ON LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE 100 YEAR PLAN

Chairman Bohm presented the LCFP 100 Year Plan that Jess Ray gave to him and in it he described the 3 10,000 acre complexes planned, along with prevention of species loss and eradication of buckthorn.

K. DISCUSSION REGARDING MOVING AUGUST MEETING TO 8/19

It was discovered that the Village Board meeting was scheduled for 8/19/14, so the alternative was to keep the 8/26/14 meeting date without the recording secretary (who would be on vacation) and someone else could take minutes, or change the date to 9/2/14. It was readily agreed to meet on Tuesday, 9/2/14 at 7:30pm. Bob Irvin thought there was little

chance of conflict with the Zoning, Planning and Appeals Commission, which sometimes meets on the first Tuesday of the month.

L. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT MAY APPEAR BEFORE THE AD HOC PANEL FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE BOARD.

Member Johnson inquired once the open land planner was selected, if all future meetings would be open to the public.

M. ADJOURNMENT

With no further items discussed, Member Stephenson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:01pm, and Member Johnson seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

Colleen Liberacki, Deputy Clerk

This document is subject to correction as noted on next meeting's minutes.