

MINUTES OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE OF THE VILLAGE OF METTAWA, ILLINOIS, HELD AT THE HOUR OF 5:30 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 08, 2015, IN THE MAPLE BOARDROOM OF THE HILTON GARDEN INN HOTEL, 26225 N. RIVERWOODS BOULEVARD, METTAWA, ILLINOIS.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Towne called the meeting to order at approximately 5:31 pm.

B. ROLL CALL

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

Present: Chairman Towne, Member Armstrong and Member Sheldon (5:34pm)

Absent: None

Also present: Bob Irvin, Village Administrator, Denis Bohm (Open Lands Ad Hoc Panel), Scott Anderson, Village Engineer; Colleen Liberacki, Deputy Village Clerk.

Chairman Towne declared a quorum present.

C. Approval of minutes from June 10, 2015.

Member Armstrong moved to accept the minutes of June 10, 2015 as presented and Chairman Towne seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

D. RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT PLAN (PREVIOUSLY DISTRIBUTED TO COMMITTEE).

Bob Irvin issued a newer version of the WRD Open Space Management plan and noted some changes with easement verbiage. Chairman Towne felt that the permanent conservation easement recommendation for noted parcels was putting the horse before the cart, before any of the parcels would be prioritized for attention. He felt that zoning them as open space was important to do, however. He gave the example of the parcel on the east side of the tollway property was adjacent to a commercial park and the village owned parcel should be zones as open space right away, but that the permanent conservation easement language needed to be worded and analyzed very carefully. He noted the example that the LCFP has their property zoned as open space, but did not take the step to put it into a third party permanent conservation easement. Member Armstrong wanted the permanent conservation easement recommendation applied judiciously. Member Sheldon added that she wanted to investigate the permanent conservation easement suggestion to the fullest before committing to same. She felt that smaller steps were better and the open space zoning should be put in place first.

Trustee Pink questioned if the recommendation itself does not interfere with anything, why not leave it as is in the plan, especially since the residents themselves expressed this desire. Member Sheldon acknowledged the residents wishes, however, she felt that this step should be done legally and properly and that in their village, perception is seen as reality, even if it is only a recommendation. Member Armstrong felt that if the wording were left as is, it would create an expectation that might not be in the residents' best interest.

Bob Irvin read the easement language and felt that it was worded as if it was appropriate for private property, not a municipality. Since this was village owned property, he suggested the wording: “open space zoning district, Illinois Nature Preserve Dedication, or dedication with easement to village”. He felt that perhaps different language would suggest a broader description. Trustee Pink cautioned that one goal of this open space management plan was to protect the land in the future and as it stands now, it could be in jeopardy in as little as two years (reelections changing the sentiment). Chairman Towne replied that he had a lot of faith in the residents. Trustee Pink reminded those present of the Costco issue and how due to lack of transparency some people’s homes were condemned while other parcels exchanged hands before the sale of the land to Costco. Chairman Towne replied that the third party easement was mostly for private party owned parcels and Scott Anderson added stating that it was motivated by a tax break. Chairman Towne stated again that he had faith in the residents and village board to follow the goal. Trustee Pink quoted Chairman Towne’s words back to him from a past board meeting “about protecting open space lands from future board sentiment that might oppose the present goal”.

Scott Anderson advised that many a permanent conservation easement could be undone, to which Member Armstrong added that the language of the chosen wording should be more restrictive, not less restrictive.

Denis Bohm clearly objected to such an idea and reminded those present that he had been at meetings going back to Mayor Ray, where no one ever stated they wanted the parcels available for future development, in fact, this is contrary to what the majority residents wanted for the open land, and this was contrary to the purpose of the plan and the intent to limit the future board from making decisions that were not sympathetic to the open lands sentiment. Member Sheldon felt that they should pursue the open space zoning first and then attempt the wording with the appropriate loopholes for each parcel. Bob Irvin suggested an alternative wording, “open space zoning, Illinois Nature Preserve Dedication, conservation easement dedicated to a third party, sole conservation easement or other such mechanism”. Trustee Pink added that the objective should be to prohibit development.

Denis Bohm favored the third party easement, since the parcel owner assigns the stewardship responsibility to someone else to guard against violation. He further stated for the Illinois Nature Preserve Dedication, a commission must approve any changes. Chairman Towne reported that he knew of no developer currently looking at any of the village owned parcels waiting to take advantage of the lack of permanent conservation easement status. Bob Irvin suggested that they accept the changed wording of the recommendation of the permanent conservation easements for the parcels.

It was moved by Member Armstrong, and seconded by Chairman Towne, to recommend to the Village Board that they approve the Open Lands Management Plan as presented by WRD Environmental with the following change: Remove the individual recommendation for each parcel “that it be entered into a permanent conservation easement” and substitute a blanket statement that “it is recommended that numerous village owned open space parcels be protected by open space zoning, Illinois Nature Preserve Dedication, conservation easement dedicated to a third party, sole conservation easement or other such mechanism with the intent to prohibit

development of said parcels” and this would be placed in the opening pages of the plan. The motion was carried.

E. UPDATE ON ILM (INTEGRATED LAKES MANAGEMENT) MAINTENANCE PLAN FOR WHIPPOORWILL PARK

Chairman Towne was disappointed that April Nielsen did not attend the meeting as promised, since she was going to walk the berm and report on an updated plan. He wanted a more detailed eradication plan to avoid destroying quality plants that were trying to thrive among the red clover and other undesirable invasives. He thought a spot spraying approach would accomplish the task, and wanted to wait for the next meeting to present an update.

F. DISCUSSION OF PRELIMINARY PLAN FOR OASIS PARK AND UPDATED BERM TOPOGRAPHY PRESENTATION

Chairman Towne reported that he was not happy with the Teska & Associates preliminary plan, as it did not detail the berm and topography. He will see about printing a larger map for all to view. Scott Anderson offered to enlarge and print what was needed. Chairman Towne felt that the base map with trails and berm lines evident was necessary before they could discuss plans and later go out for bids for the work. Denis Bohm asked if there could be bids for stewardship, to which Chairman Towne replied yes.

G. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT MAY APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEE FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATION TO THE VILLAGE BOARD.

Chairman Towne reported that the plants on the Whippoowill berm were coming along nicely, as well as the trees and bushes, and inquired about a possible fall burn. Member Sheldon advised that the berm should be mowed in July so the up and coming seedlings would receive more sun. Trustee Pink acknowledged the time and effort put forth by this committee to achieve the results thus far. Denis Bohm suggested each committee submit a year end report of its accomplishments, which was declined due to the extra work.

H. ADJOURNMENT

With no further items discussed, it was moved by Chairman Towne to adjourn the meeting at 6:21pm, seconded by Member Sheldon. The motion was carried.

Colleen Liberacki, Deputy Clerk

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