



ACME TOWNSHIP
SHORELINE PARK AND PRESERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Monday, December 12, 2005, 5:30 p.m.
Acme Township Hall
6042 Acme Road, Williamsburg MI 49690

Meeting called to Order at 5:30 p.m.

Members present: P. Salathiel, P Brink (Co-Chairs) C. Abernethy, F. Gingras, K. Guy, D. Krause, O. Sherberneau

Members absent: N. Knopf

Staff present: S. Corpe, Township Manager, N. Edwardson, Recording Secretary

A. Correspondence: None

B. Reports: None

C. Limited Public Comment: None

D. New Business:

Salathiel reviewed map of shoreline properties between Bunker Hill Road and M-72 East.

Matt McDonough, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) provided "A Landowner's Guide." Page 15 describes the GTRLC's criteria for land acquisitions. Their goals for land preservation differ somewhat from those of the advisory, but it can serve as a useful guideline. There are 3 "proactive criteria for properties the Conservancy identifies and a longer list of "reactive" criteria for evaluating properties where the owner makes the first approach to the Conservancy.

It is important to begin by identifying key reasons for wanting to acquire land: to protect scenic views? Environmental resources? Public water access? Brink commented that size; adjacency to other protected properties, recreational and scenic attributes; and public water access are his key four reasons. McDonough said potential to acquire adjacent properties can also be a factor to piecing the puzzle together over the long-term. Salathiel asked if this project would generally be something to which the GTRLC would contribute? McDonough commented that most of these properties wouldn't qualify at the current time. His board also has his time scheduled on other property projects for the next several years.

Krause asked if McDonough knew about the MDEQ Coastal Zone Management Program; he is familiar with it. Cathie Cunningham Ballard, who administers the program, is a fan of the region.

The group agreed to assign weighting/focus to the five property characteristics/criteria mentioned by Brink and McDonough previously. McDonough suggested adding a sixth: public benefit. An area that is landlocked between subdivisions

is less beneficial to the public than easily accessible parcels.

McDonough reminded the group that preserving the shoreline won't happen overnight. The four people who started the waterfront acquisition in downtown Traverse City forty years ago with the Open Space came this fall to the demolition of the Smith Barney building, one of the last properties in the chain. The groundwork laid now can turn into a patchwork of acquisitions that will ultimately connect as properties become available and are acquired.

Taking options on properties or obtaining a first right of refusal can be attractive to donors. Being able to say to someone: "we have an option and need to raise \$ x within 18 months," it creates both a sense of urgency and a tangible focus for the donation. There's no rule of thumb for the amount or length of an option – it varies from situation to situation.

Krause feels the best answer to the funding problem is to seek a millage plus grant funding. McDonough recommends against this for funding option payments, which are essentially a risk that may or may not bear fruit. Use public money to fund firm results.

Talking to landowners can also benefit from including discussions about the tax benefits of bargain sales. A separate 501 (c) 3 is not needed-making a bargain sale to a government is the same as making one to a non-profit.

Brink passed out information from his discussion with Jeanne Snow at the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation. (GTRCF) The two options that appealed to him most were housing funds at either the GTRLC or GTRCF. McDonough indicated that his agency doesn't do this, so GTRCF would be the avenue. There would be carrying costs involved. The township could establish a segregated fund without needing to set up a 501 (c) 3. or, an existing entity such as Friends for Yuba Preservation could be re-oriented. Ms Snow told Brink that sometimes people are more comfortable donating money to a non-governmental entity. Corpe noted that the GRRCF has a system in place for accepting donations of appreciated securities that the township does not. Gingras observed that donors might feel better about donating directly to a cause rather than indirectly through an umbrella agency. The group decided to look into either a twp 501(c)3 or re-using another one.

Guy suggested holding a brainstorming session to put together a business plan. Discussion needs to include the question of if there are people who should be added to the committee, and if so, who? Long-term goals need to be defined, and assets listed. One topic for the neext meeting will be to set the stage for the meeting where the business plan can be developed.

Knopf has expressed discomfort with the proposed text passed out this evening. The committee worked on some of the text in question.

The meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 30, at 4:30 p.m.

ADJOURNED AT 6:40 p.m.