



**ACME TOWNSHIP  
FARMLAND & OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Friday, March 11, 2011 1:00 p.m.  
Acme Township Hall  
6042 Acme Road, Williamsburg MI 49690**

**Meeting called to Order at 1:15 p.m.**

**Members present:** B. Garvey, B.Carstens  
**Members excused:** None  
**Staff present:** S. Vreeland, Township Manager  
N. Edwardson, Recording Secretary  
**Also present:** B. Bourdages, Farmland Preservation  
D. Hoxie, A. Pineau, R. Sayler,, N. Veliquette,C. Walter

1. **Limited Public Comment:** None
2. **Approval of Minutes from March 25, 2010 meeting:**  
**Motion by Carstens. Seconded by Garvey to approve the meeting minutes from March 25, 2010. Motion carried unanimously.**
3. **Correspondence:** None
4. **New Business:**
  1. **Update from Brian Bourdages, Farmland Protection Specialist, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy**

Bourdages said we are working on our implementation schedule for our current three projects, Cherry County Cove, Send Brothers and Ken Engle that all have matching funds. He said we have some issues to resolve with title work . We will probably do three equal tax payments over a three year period of time, which will spread out the capital gains. There is a IRS ruling that one would pay interest on installments. It does require that closing happen at the first payment which would require a note between the township and landowners. Vreeland and Bourdages are working on that. We will start working on the Sayler's farm in the fall. It would be Boudages goal to have closed before harvest time.

Our revenues are down because of a slight decrease in taxes. We asked the County Board to open applications again in November.Bourdages talked about property behind Shoreline fruit owned by the Veliquettes, Dorrance Amos and Doug White that have expressed an interest in applying. None of these are currently in application but would show the County the ongoing interest. Garvey asked if someone came in would they go though the scoring process. They would and County has stepped up to help. Garvey also asked if someone with a higher score knock someone else out. Bourdages said no. Carstens commented that the success of this farmland preservation fits right in with the Grand Vision.
5. **Old Business:**
  - a. **Open forum discussion: how Acme Township's Zoning Ordinance can be revised to be more agricultural and agribusiness-friendly**

Vreeland said at our last set of discussions we did discuss the possibility of suggesting amendments to the section of requirements related to wineries. Since that time, two new specific ag-use questions have been raised by various members of the

community. She would like to begin the discussion today on “Stand-alone” Wine Tasting Rooms in the Ag District.

Our current winery regulations permit having a tasting room in conjunction with active wine production and limited to 25% of the wine processing and storage area or 4,000 sq. ft., whichever is less. Tasting rooms are also permitted as stand-alone storefronts in some of our business districts. The question has recently been raised by Ken Engle and Nels Veliquette, as she understands them in different ways and for different reasons, as to whether the township should be encouraged to permit stand-alone or satellite tasting room in the Ag district without the current tie to production space.

At the Planning Commission, Vreeland felt she heard a willingness to consider the question to the extent that such wine tasting rooms would not be “carpetbaggers”.

Some other ideas heard included tying such a use to minimum required acreages of land under agricultural production within our township so as to make them truly a part of our farming community rather than dispersed retail storefronts, There would be no seeming ties to the preservation and promotion of active agriculture in our township other than using the rural scenery and experience as part of the draw.

Engle ask that copies of Peninsula Township’s winery and tasting room-related ordinances be included in the discussion today.

Discussion followed.

The other area of discussion was “Entertainment Spaces in the Ag District.” Our current winery regulations permit “special events” as an additional conditional use” associated with a winery. Such events are highly regulated, and Section 9.25.6b requires them to be “associated with the promotion of wine usage and education”.

Vreeland believes we are talking about banquet hall facilities.

Garvey has an historic restored barn on his ag-zoned property on the north side of Brackett Road. He asked about the possibility of making it available for parties. Vreeland believes that this type of use would appear to be a banquet facility and not currently permissible in the Ag district except as a agri-tourism component of an overall farming operation

Discussion followed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 8, 2011, at 1:00 pm

**Adjourned at 3:00 p.m.**