

Sharon Township Planning Commission

Minutes August 11, 2011 draft

Chairman Lewis called the meeting to order at about 8:10 PM. Commissioners Lewis, Cole, Murray, and Yordanich present. ZA Wilson was absent. There were nine audience participants.

The minutes of the July 2011 meeting were read and approved as corrected on a motion by Cole, seconded by Yordanich.

There was no initial public comment.

Approval of Agenda

Cole suggested that the Public Hearing be split to review the proposals individually and also the Commission discussion following the hearings. He also requested that "vicinity map definition" be added to New Business regarding ordinance changes..

Zoning Administrator

No present.

ZBA

No meeting

Board Report

Bill Lewis reported that he has accepted an appointment as interim Trustee until November following the recall of a trustee and stated that as Vice-chair Bill Murray will chair Commission meetings through October. During that time Lewis will serve as Board representative to the Planning Commission. Lewis also reported that former Commissioner Brian Simons has been appointed interim Treasurer following the recall of the township Treasurer. The Board also approved an application for a "P.A. 116" status.

SWWCOG

No meeting

The Chair opened the first Public Hearing.

Public Hearing: Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Parking lot on Grass Lake Road

Mr. B, J, Thornton of Grass Lake Road who owns the property on the west side of the nature preserve area stated that the had had concerns.

Mr. Tom Freeman of Parks and Recreation addressed a concern raised by the Township's planning consultant about the orientation of the sign by saying that they preferred to have a single-sided sign facing the road.

One of the Haselschwardt ladies asked whether the nature preserve properties would be open to the public. In response Mr. Freeman explained how security is handled and in particular that the access lots are built fairly close to the road so that activities in the lots are visible from the road.

The lady continued with a question about the philosophy of or for the areas. Mr. Freeman related that the County Board of Commissioners established the nature areas for the quiet use and enjoyment of the areas for nature study by the public, and that no motorized vehicles are allowed other than in the parking lot, that maintained paths are provided for walking with the intent that visitors remain on the paths and that hunting is strictly prohibited in the areas.

Another man asked how many spaces there would be in the lot. Mr. Freeman replied 6.

There being no new comments, the Chair closed the Public Hearing.

The Chair opened the second Public Hearing.

Public Hearing: Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Parking lot on Hashley Road

Ms. Haselschwardt stated that her family owns property on the west side of the County Parks property. She noted that trespassers on the preserve property under previous owners had further trespassed on their property and caused concerns, especially as they have some outbuildings near the boundary. (NOTE: The Haselschwardt property is on the "back" side of the preserve.) Chairman Lewis asked how close the outbuildings are to the property line. Mr. Freeman stated that the Parks Commission will fence the preserve properties when so requested by the adjoining property owners.

Ms. Haselschwardt then read the letter received by Chairman Lewis by email on August 10 from Howard J. Haselschwardt.

Thornton asked if the property can be developed. Mr. Freeman stated that it cannot be. He also stated that the previous owners were thinking of developing the property for equestrian uses. He further stated that in some cases where a portion of a preserve is farmland a portion of the property may be leased to a farmer for crop production.

Commissioner Yordanich inquired of Mr. Freeman whether other townships required special use permits. Mr. Freeman replied that it varies by township.

In response to another question by Yordanich, Mr. Freeman stated that the supporting millage is county-wide.

Commissioner Cole asked how many of the county's 20 townships currently have these preserves. Mr. Freeman replied about 11.

Commissioner Murray asked what would happen if the permit for a parking lot were denied. Mr. Freeman replied that parking would be on the road.

There being no new comments, the Chair closed the Public Hearing.

Old Business

The Commission discussed the nature preserves and the associated parking lots. Cole asked about a one acre cutout from the overall 80 acre parcel for the Hashley Road preserve. It is a homestead that was split from the larger parcel years ago. Cole also asked about the trails in the preserves. Mr. Freeman stated that they are built and maintained by Parks and Recreation.

A motion by Murray seconded by Cole to table action on the parking lot applications with the County to prepare responses to Section 5.06 and Erin Perdue to also review them for the September meeting. Motion **PASSED**.

New business.

The Commission suggested that the Ordinance be reviewed for any consequences of changes to enabling legislation by P. A. 110 of 2006.

Cole requested that we look for or develop a good definition of "vicinity map" as we currently have no such definition and we have received some that weren't very useful.

Final Public Comment

Haselschwardt stated his belief that it was poor planning on the part of the county to purchase the property if they needed a special use permit.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, September 8 at 8:00 PM.

The meeting was **adjourned**.

Submitted by Richard L. Cole, Secretary, Acting as Administrative Assistant.

Approved by: _____

Date: _____